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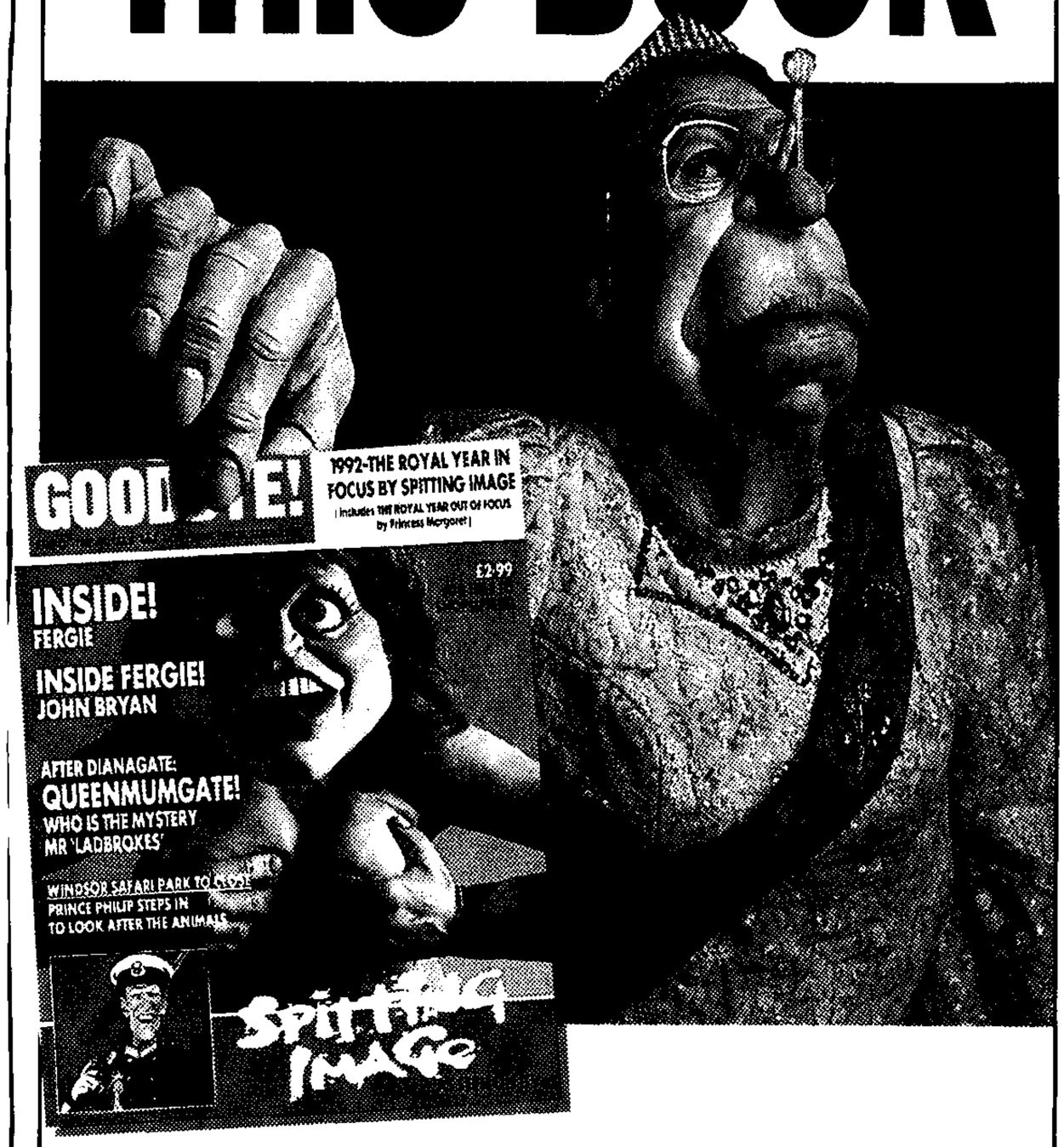

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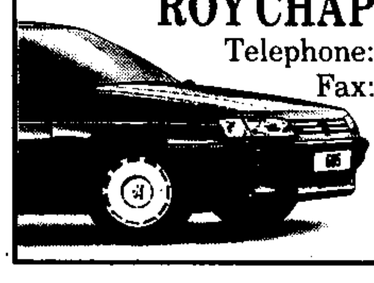

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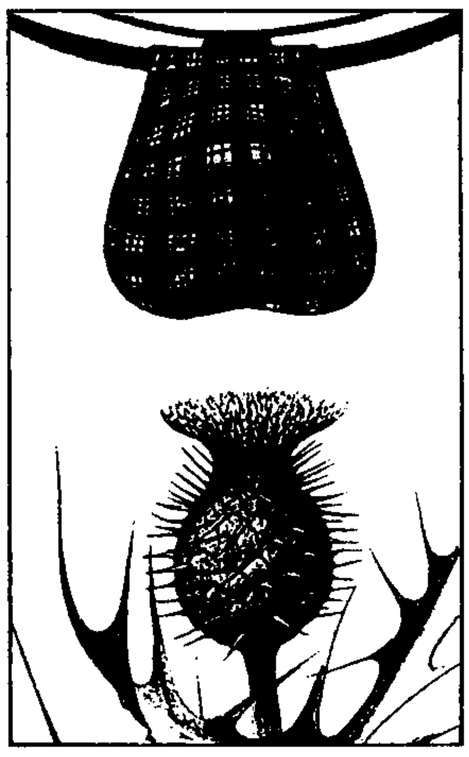
GALASHIELS (pl.n.) A form of particularly long sparse sideburns which are part of the mandatory turnout of British Rail guards.

GALLIPOLI (adj.) Of the behaviour of a bottom lip trying to spit out mouthwash after an injection at the dentist. Hence loose, floppy, useless.

GAMMERSGILL (n.) Embarrassed stammer you emit when a voice answers the phone and you realise that you haven't the faintest recollection of who it is you've just rung.



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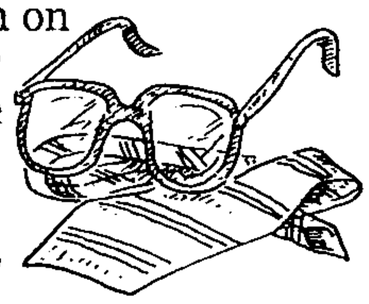
Gnome

ON MONDAY this week the Daily Telegraph produced an emergency edition of the paper after a security alert at Canary Wharf. There was no front page, many regular pages were missing and some did not appear in the usual order. It was a huge improvement. Lord Gnome has therefore decided to adopt the new Telegraph design for this and all subsequent issues.

PRIVATE EYE SIGNING SESSION

Ian Hislop, Richard Ingrams, Craig Brown and Barry Fantoni will be at John Menzies, 56 Old Broad Street, London EC2 from 1.00 to 2.00pm on Friday 27 November to sign copies of the new PRIVATE EYE books: *The Secret Diary of John Major, Rear Columns, Poetry Corner and Colemanballs 6.*



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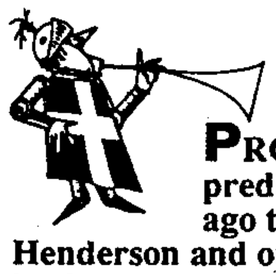


PROFOUND *ennui* followed the prediction in the *Eye* several weeks ago that the case of HM Customs v Henderson and others at the Old Bailey would lead to great embarrassment for the government and its intelligence services.

Nor was anyone specially interested in the fantastic haste (also reported in the *Eye*) with which officials from the ministries rushed to Judge Smedley with "public immunity notices" in a determined effort to ban from the trial any reference to the security services and the defendants' connection with them.

To find out more, read our bribery and warmongering special, *Eye told you so...* on page 25.

THE DECISION to prosecute Paul Henderson and his co-defendants was taken early in 1991 as the first British lives were being lost in Operation Desert Storm.

The plan served a political purpose: to secure the reelection of John Major without the electorate learning of his government's role in creating the Iraqi armaments industry, which it then had to go to war to dismantle. This plan was wholly successful thanks to the sub-judice rule preventing comment on any issue concerning Matrix Churchill until the trial was over.

In October 1990, customs interviewed Paul Henderson and sent the transcripts to MI6. No charges were preferred at that stage. It was only in January 1991, as Desert Storm was gathering, that the green light came from the government to go ahead with a Matrix Churchill prosecution.

A number of extraordinary "statements" were collected for use in this prosecution, made by ministers, senior civil servants and MI6. The charges of deceiving the government were not actually laid against Henderson and his colleagues until later in February 1991, as the war with Iraq was ending. There is no basis for any belief that the commissioner of customs did not honour the customs' undertaking to Nicholas Ridley, back in June 1990, to take no action on prosecution without government approval.

By the time approval came, John Major was basking in the reflected glory of George Bush and "Stormin' Norman". He had an election to fight within the next 15 months, and it was crucial to ensure that the electorate did not learn of the moral squalor and disastrous consequences of British defence-related trade with Iraq. The perfect solution was to bring criminal proceedings, the trial of which could be delayed until after the election. Under sub-judice rules, there could be no media comment on any issues likely to be involved in such a trial. And there wasn't — until it collapsed last week.

All this ignorance allowed the attorney-general to suggest that the trial was a bungled operation by maverick customs men over whom he had no control – which wasn't true. And the prime minister was able to lay the blame on Alan Clark — the one witness who, if he did not tell the full truth, at least allowed enough of the *actualité* to be dragged out of him to stop the show-trial.

THE attempts of West Midlands police to reconvict at least some of the Birmingham Six are becoming desperate.

The latest move of the 20-strong squad set up under Supt Brian Wall at Brierley Hill is to interview 80 people who worked with Richard McIlkenny and Johnny Walker at Pressings and Forgings in Witton, Birmingham.

Eighteen years after the bombings the police are asking the workers precise questions like "Can you remember them doing anything suspicious?" and "Did you ever see them carrying anything?"

Each of the interviews has lasted two or three hours, with legal aid solicitors sitting in at £45 an hour. That means legal fees of around £12,000 — plus all the police costs — just for a minor part of the inquiry. Train tickets bought by some of the six on their fateful attempts to return to Ireland are being subjected to forensic analysis in an attempt to find some genuine trace of explosives, again at vast cost.

THE *EYE* is widely acclaimed (or blamed, depending how you look at it) for the decision of Tarmac plc to sack its corporate affairs director, Ken Jackson.

The wretched Jackson was responsible for public relations and Tarmac holds him partly to blame for the not entirely rapturous reception for the deal whereby Tarmac gets a £50 million "dowry" from the taxpayer for being good enough to take over the government's Property Services Agency.

However, Jackson's replacement, Shane Bruen, is unlikely to lessen resentment at the dowry and take-over, even though he is to receive some £5,000 a year more than his predecessor. The reason is the age-old problem of the monkey and the organ-grinder.

Only a small majority of the PSA's projects division staff voted to be taken over by Tarmac (the rest will be seconded). Many of the dissidents were disturbed by a letter on 30 October from P.S. Draper, of the department of the environment, announcing that the government was guaranteeing "early retirement and severance rights" for five years if their new employers "do not pay you your full entitlement because of insolvency".

Insolvency? Tarmac? The biggest house-builder in the country financially embarrassed? Can that really be a possibility?

According to a secret memo, one of the many dangerously subversive documents floating about the PSA at the moment, Tarmac's £1.4 billion assets are not quite as solid as they look. For instance, half that figure (£729.2 million) is tied up in quarries, or "buried in the ground". Tarmac's housing division, the document suggests, may be overvalued by £150 million, and the construction division has "negative assets" of £72 million.

It was this sort of document that led to the widespread reluctance to vote for the take-over. But Tarmac is not entirely disappointed with the vote. The company had struck a deal with the fanatically free enterprise-loving minister at environment, John Redwood, whereby if fewer than 1,000 projects division staff voted to be taken over, Redwood would increase the taxpayer's gift to Tarmac. In fact only 860 voted for Tarmac, so Redwood now has to cough up from the "public purse" he normally so vigorously defends. The *Eye* predicts he will dole out another £10 million.

STREET of SHAME

DAVID "Rommel" Montgomery intends to fatten up Mirror Group Newspapers via a ruthless thinning of staff before making a management buy-out bid for the company. At the same time he has been acquiring a reputation as a proletarian leveller — abolishing the (specially reinforced) executive lifts and executive dining room.

Yet in order to be comfortable for the long, bitter struggle against his own workers, "Rommel", who lives in far-away Maida Vale, has installed himself in a hotel near the Temple for £145 a night.

On Friday 13 November, *Daily Mirror* editor Richard Stott was assured that he would be editor for as long as he liked, and Stott persuaded his anxious staff to go back to work on this basis. He knew David Banks had been approached, but was assured that he would be offered the *People* editorship.

On Sunday morning Stott was invited to Claridge's for breakfast to discuss world affairs, only to be told that Banks was in fact to replace him and that a generous contractual settlement would depend on his staying silent.

Banks, who claimed he was "entirely independent" from management, consulted Montgomery three times on major editorial decisions during his first day as editor.

There may be a question mark, though, over Banks's health. He is apparently a Maxwell-sized individual who at one point weighed as much as 27 stone. While working for one of Murdoch's papers, a blood vessel in the back of his leg burst one day in the newsroom, spraying unfortunate hacks with blood. His benevolent employer sent him to a health farm to curb his excessive consumption of food and drink.

Likely to reemerge from the post-Maxwell gloom is Charlie "Gorbals" Wilson, who acted as a spokesman, first for the Maxwell family then for Mirror Group (once the boys had been arrested). Gorbals, who edited the *Times* during the Wapping debacle, is now working closely alongside Montgomery, ensuring that Mirror Group is run by two former Murdoch acolytes.

WAPPING has recently witnessed the social event of the year: the 12th birthday of young Kelvin McKenzie, the socially-challenged editor of the *Sun*.

With the paper's ban on alcohol temporarily waived for the party, Kelvin sensibly wrapped himself in a Pierre Cardin towelling robe while his raucous staff hooted at each other's sophisticated jokes.

The hacks drew the line at making any expression of sycophancy, though. Invited by deputy editor Chris "Slippery" Smith to greet Kelvin with a rendition of "Happy Birthday", they declined, only cheering when Kelvin half-mooned them, baring his underpant-enclosed backside.

Stuart "Higgy the Human Sponge" Higgins somehow managed to lay on a special treat — birthday phone calls from a couple of his old muckers, the Duchess of York and the prime minister. When the call from the PM came through, Kelvin withdrew to his padded cell, leaving the hacks with their noses pressed against its glass-panelled door.

This didn't deter *News of the Screws* editor Patsy Chapman from creeping in and grabbing Kelvin by his lunchbox while he was listening to Mr Major's blandishments. "You'll have to excuse me, prime minister," he said. "I'm being sexually assaulted by the editor of the *News of the World*. Can I put you on hold?"

Needless to say nice Mr Major obliged his master and waited patiently while Kelvin shooed Chapman out.

JUST IN case any tabloid sub-editors weren't sure what line to take on Charles and Diana's recent visit to South Korea, Camera Press — the photo agency which syndicates pictures by, among others, Lord Snowdon and Lord Lichfield — issued a helpful caption sheet explaining what the Korean photographs showed.

It began: "1: Diana looking distinctly droopy... 2: Charles making his statutory polite speech... 3: Diana appeared distant and aloof..." And so on. The recommended captions for other photos included "Diana looks away glumly", "still basically glum-looking" and "Diana wasn't enjoying her day very much".

Needless to say, no space was wasted on boring details such as where the photos were taken or what the royal couple was doing — presumably lest readers should realise that many of the "glum" shots were taken at places which are hardly conducive to high jinks, such as war memorials.

THE *Financial Times* is at last coming to heel after the *Eye*'s repeated reminders that it risks being reported to the Monopolies Commission if it goes on plugging Sky-TV.

Its latest mention ended with the brazen admission: "Pearson, the publishers of the *Financial Times*, has a significant stake in British Sky Broadcasting, the largest satellite TV operator." That's better.

However, the paper still allows Raymond Snoddy to offer an apologia for the falling sales of dishes. He notes that 71,000 dishes were installed in October compared with 100,000 in October last year. That is a potentially disastrous fall of 30 percent, but Snoddy does not put it like that. Instead he says it may have been caused by a shortage of dishes from Amstrad.

Last month, in a similar report of falling sales, Snoddy said "supplies were now starting to improve".

HACKS at the *Grauniad* who resent the primadonna status of profile-writer Catherine Bennett have been both amused and horrified to learn of her rate of remuneration.

Bennett, who is employed on a £38,000 contract — way above the average *Grauniad* feature writer's salary — doesn't actually write very much and her lack of output prompted one hack to do some calculations. Over the past year she has been receiving approximately £1,800 per article.

JUST LIKE the government's failed economic and foreign policies, the *Daily Telegraph*'s blind support for the Conservative party doesn't add up.

When John Major supposedly "won" the recent Maastricht division by 319 to 316 votes, the *Torygraph* brayed the next morning: "MAASTRICHT DEFEAT FOR LABOUR — Six-vote Government majority with support from Liberals."

Perhaps the baffling arithmetic had been deliberately engineered to cheer up Max "Hitler" Hastings's chum Douglas Hurd.

DAVID "H J" Leppard, half of the less-than-dynamic duo who make up the *Sunset Times* Insight team, recently contacted Major Robert Turp, a highly respected arms dealer and former spook, and invited him to lunch at the Savoy to discuss Chieftain tanks.

On arrival at the Savoy, Leppard explained to Turp that due to severe cutbacks in expenses, they would not actually be eating there. He then led his surprised guest to a cheap, shabby joint round the corner.

At the end of the meal the major was even more surprised when Leppard suddenly announced that he had no suitable credit card on him, nor apparently any cash. The bemused Turp was left to pay the bill.

PS: Over the lunch, after disposing of the Chieftain tank business, Turp mentioned to Leppard that he knew of an attempt to sell smuggled plutonium to Saddam Hussein. Leppard airily said he was not interested in that sort of thing. So Turp took the story to Barrie Penrose of the *Sunday Express*, who proceeded to run it as a huge front-page splash.

PPS: Readers sometimes ask us what David "H J" Leppard's middle initials stand for. The answer is Hand Job.

LORD GNOME has lost count of the *Sunday Times*'s so-called "exclusives" that first appeared — genuinely exclusively — in *Private Eye*. But he was tickled to note that the overweight weekly is now openly plundering the magazine for ideas.

Captioned "Double take", juxtaposed photographs of Charlie Chaplin and Madonna in a recent edition of the *Sunset Times* bore an uncanny resemblance to a certain popular feature that has been running in the *Eye* for donkey's years.

LIBEL NEWS

THE CURSE of Robert Maxwell continues to take a punishing toll on the resources of Mirror Group Newspapers, which has just paid out a staggering sum in libel damages to Rupert Allason, the Conservative MP for Torbay, in an out-of-court settlement.

Allason sued over a front-page editorial in October last year that attacked both him and Labour MP George Galloway, who is also suing. Penned by Maxwell's mouthpiece, Joe Haines, the diatribe was published shortly before Maxwell died.

Allason and Galloway had each placed early-day motions in the Commons drawing attention to the book by American journalist Seymour Hersh, which claimed that *Daily Mirror* foreign editor Nick "Sneaky" Davies was an arms-dealer and Mossad intelligence asset. Hersh had also accused Maxwell of seeking to discredit Mordecai Vanunu, the Israeli who blew the whistle on Israel's nuclear weapons programme. The *Mirror* article lambasted Allason and Galloway for abusing parliamentary privilege and suggested that they had done so without a shred of evidence. Within days, Nick Davies was exposed as a liar.

A couple of weeks ago, as Allason's case was about to go to trial, the Mirror Group paid £105,000 into court. This meant that if there had been an award of damages at trial and it had been below this figure, Allason would not have been entitled to recover his full legal costs.

Most libel plaintiffs would balk at pursuing a claim in the teeth of such a hefty payment-in, but Allason showed a poker-player's nerve by holding out for more. The final settlement was damages of £225,000 plus costs of £25,000 (these were small because Allason had represented himself throughout most of the proceedings to date).

● One reason Allason represented himself was that he had previously been represented in a libel matter against the *Daily Torygraph* — with unrewarding results — by Peter Carter-Fuck & Partners.

Allason had threatened to sue the *Torygraph*'s Peterbore column for suggesting that one of his books had been withdrawn from bookshops following legal action by the retired spy Greville Wynne. His point was that it was only W.H. Smith that had withdrawn the book, not all bookshops. But when the *Torygraph*'s lawyers pointed out that W.H. Smith had more than one bookshop and that the statement had therefore not been inaccurate, Allason beat a retreat.

Carter-Fuck & Partners has not been enjoying the world of libel litigation recently. First there was the Jani Allan case, which it lost; then there was the Mona Bauwens case, which resulted in a no-score draw; now there has been another loss for the firm's client Mitch Mitchell, former drummer with the Jimi Hendrix Experience, who sued over a book which he said had accused him of racist and bigoted attitudes. Mitchell faces costs of around £50,000.

THE *Torygraph*'s Peterbore column, meanwhile, has received a writ on behalf of an unlikely source — the absurd poodle-faker "Dirty" Dai Llewellyn.

Llewellyn has lately taken to writing pieces for the *Evening Standard* and *Daily Mail* about the vicissitudes for the older man dating young girls. Apart from organising louche birthday parties for Nigel Pratt-Dumpster, Llewellyn can boast few achievements in adult life. Nonetheless he has taken grave offence at Peterbore's description of him as "frothy" and has issued a writ accordingly. We feel certain the *Torygraph* will resist this "frothy" claim from the superficial and soufflé-like Llewellyn.

Anthony Smart and Howard Soper

IN THE high court last week *Private Eye* accepted that allegations published on 16 February 1990 to the effect that an assault on a disabled hunt saboteur by hunt followers was the responsibility of Anthony Smart and Howard Soper were untrue. We apologise to both Mr Smart and Mr Soper for the distress caused by the publication of the article.

AS THE Matrix Churchill affair unfolds, William Hague, toadying Tory MP for the Yorkshire seat of Richmond, may be haunted by remarks he made in a constituency newsletter.

"I personally find one of the most refreshing things about John Major," he wrote over the summer, "is his determination to make the government of the country a more open process and public servants more responsive to the needs of the public themselves. Already he is sweeping away much of the traditional and obsessive secrecy of the cabinet."

It is a pity the four cabinet ministers who *followed the attorney*-general's orders and signed public immunity orders seeking to keep documents out of court in the Matrix Churchill case do not appear to share Mr Major's refreshing openness.

"Let's play machine-tool operators"

TORY party finances are now so precarious Conservative Central Office has taken the unusual step of privatising its regular briefing meetings by inviting outside sponsorship.

A conference on water privatisation on 3 December is being held courtesy of Schlumberger Technical Services, electrical engineers who make appliances for the water industry. Schlumberger's chairman, Alan Plumpton OBE, will be speaking alongside David Maclean, the countryside minister. Perhaps Matrix Churchill would like to sponsor a briefing by El Presidente Heseltine on export drives...

AFTER the botched massacre of British Coal, stand by for the abandoned rape of the railways.

The government's problem is that there are not enough would-be rapists around, as demonstrated by the failure of John "Brunel" MacGregor's "conferences" to whip up interest in the new franchises which are supposed to replace the national rail network.

MacGregor's "come-ons" have been attended mainly by brokers and other middlemen who made a fast buck in the "tell Sid" era. Genuine investors in such a daft scheme have been scarce enough to give MacGregor cold feet. It is only the fear of making another U-turn that is keeping up the cabinet's spirits.

Ministers are clearly relying on Robert Adley, the anti-rail privatisation Tory MP who is chairman of the transport select committee, to do the necessary demolition job for them. On recent form, Adley should be able to collect enough other sane Tory members to "do a coal" and rescue the government and the country from the rail privatisation bill when it is introduced next month.

If Adley fails, there is always the Lords where two prominent Tory peers, Whitelaw and Ridley, both of whom know a lot about rail, are convinced of the lunacy of the scheme.

MAXWELL peer Lord Williams of Elvel was surprised to find that his election as Labour leader in the Lords did not proceed according to plan.

As deputy leader, he expected to take over from Lord (Cledwyn) Hughes unopposed, and did not consider that his close association with the late Cap'n Rob should cause any problem. However, a majority of their socialist lordships appear to have differed and elected Lord (Ivor) Richard instead.

STROUD'S Tory MP Roger (aka Noddy) Knapman has a knack of antagonising some of his constituents (see *Eye* 789).

His latest gaffe concerns a letter he sent to the Rev Colin Biggs, a Dursley clergyman who had written to Noddy concerning cuts in UK aid to the Third World and who was startled to receive, in reply, a stock letter sent to the 500 constituents who had written to Mr Knapman complaining about proposed pit closures.

Parts of the letter seemed to have little to do even with pit closures, containing such comments as: "We must urgently ensure increased demand in the economy because so many shopkeepers have too few customers and so many factories have too few orders." Nevertheless, the letter began: "Thank you for your recent letter concerning the proposed closure of 31 coal pits," and continued, "I have read every letter but hope you will forgive me for producing a standard reply."

THE Labour group in the European parliament faces a £750 bill for legal advice, for which no sanction was obtained in advance, arising from an angry article written by Westminster MP Ken Livingstone.

Back in September, Red Ken attacked British MEPs in his *Sun* column for mounting "a campaign of lies and propaganda which even Dr Goebbels would have hesitated to chance his arm with." Glyn Ford, leader of the Labour MEPs, was a bit miffed and the group's chief executive, Dianne Hayter, discussed the possibility of obtaining legal advice about libel with the group's treasurer, Richard Balfe.

Balfe did not regard Livingstone's remarks as actionable and suggested the group seek free legal advice. The free advice, obtained separately by both Hayter and Balfe, pointed out that there are problems when a group of plaintiffs sues, especially over a general political criticism. However, Hayter took it upon herself to obtain paid legal advice from solicitor Geoffrey Bindman and barrister Richard Parkes. This, too, was unenthusiastic about the prospects of success and urged the Labour group to "weigh very carefully the uncertainties and disadvantages of the proposed litigation against the chance of an apology in a year or more's time, and an award of damages for each individual which, given the number of plaintiffs and the difficulties of reference, would be small."

The European Labour group is shortly to decide whether it should bear the cost of indulging its leader's wounded pride.

GEORGE WALDEN, the Tory MP for Buckingham who is on the editorial staff of the *Daily Telegraph*, wrote an article in that paper early last month in which he argued that the Maastricht treaty was bad for Europe and Britain.

The headline read: "George Walden explains why even a committed European such as he cannot find it in his heart to vote for the government line on the Maastricht treaty."

Quite what happened to the treaty in the following weeks to make it suddenly palatable to Walden is not obvious, but on Wednesday 4 November he gaily tripped into the division lobbies to support the government.

THE CAMPAIGN to free Frank Johnson (see *Eye* 800) has a new, if coy, supporter: Labour shadow home secretary Tony Blair.

He has written to Kenneth Clarke, the home secretary, about Johnson, convicted in 1976 of the murder of his employer and benefactor, John Sheridan.

Blur has assured parliamentary colleagues he is very concerned about the Johnson case and will take it up with Clarke.

Hacks calling Blur's Commons office have been told a different story, however. "We have written to the home office asking for more details about the case," one was told. "We have not taken it up, we are not supporting the campaign and there is no possibility of Mr Blair making a statement about it to you or anyone else."

This mysterious behaviour will come as little surprise to supporters of the Guildford Four who remember that, after apparently listening intently to a briefing about the case from one of their number, Blur queried: "The Guildford Four... tell me again, how many of them are there?"

CHURCH NEWS

THE crown prosecution service (CPS) has decided it is not "in the public interest" to prosecute where the law has plainly been broken by the Tory party.

This unusual interpretation of the even hand of British law and order follows a huge police inquiry in Cornwall into the rigging of votes at the general election and in the local elections in the St Ives constituency in the far south-west of the peninsula.

This followed the curious habit of Tory party workers of collecting proxy and postal votes for old people in residential homes, and using them for the Tories when it was often not clear that that was the voter's preference.

The process was exposed by *Panorama* earlier this year. In one case, the dubious "proxy votes" made a crucial difference. A seat was taken in Hayle from Labour by the Tories by nine votes and Labour lost overall control of the borough council, which is now hung.

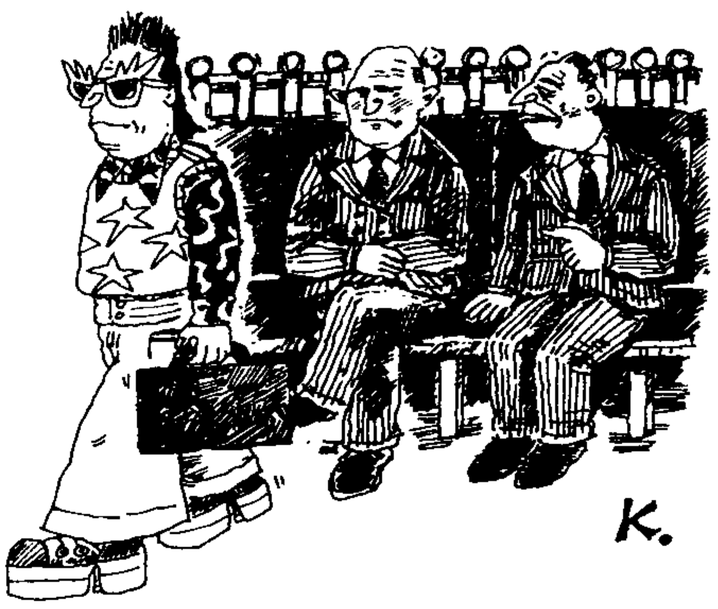
The police were very pleased with their inquiry, and fully expected at least one prosecution. But the CPS gave strict orders that its decision not to prosecute should *not* be publicised — and the police promptly and angrily leaked it. Sourly, the CPS complained that the police leak had "caused us some problems". The age-old CPS maxim that injustice should not only not be done, but should also not be seen not to be done, had been cruelly broken.

IS THE baleful influence on the Labour party of Goldman Sachs (the Maxwell merchant bank) partner and economics guru Gavyn Davies about to be reasserted?

It was Davies who, as Kinnock's unofficial economic adviser, was adamant in insisting on continued ERM membership and resisting devaluation. The fact that Sue Nye (aka Mrs Gavyn Davies), who was Kinnock's secretary, is now installed in shadow chancellor Gordon Brown's office looks ominous.

Perhaps Labour will pre-empt the Tories in championing a return to the ERM (while, of course, simultaneously reducing UK interest rates to 5 percent).

'Backbiter'



"Atkins is chairman of the totally uninfluential backbench 1972 Committee..."

Grovel

WITH Lord Owen, the UN peace envoy, I retire to the agreeable, centrally heated state rooms of Dublin Castle where, behind locked doors and in total secrecy, we hammer out a democratic solution for the Balkans.

Our aim is to bring peace to Bosnia where the wretched people have only death and winter to look forward to. In the hope of stopping the bloodshed, we seek the help of secretary of state Sir Patrick Mayhew, who has been so successful in bringing a lasting peace to Northern Ireland.

All I may report of our chinwag is that a large quantity of digestive biscuits was consumed: our meeting was held under the aegis of the Trilateral Commission which, funded by zealots like former United States vice-president Nelson Rockefeller, insists on absolute discretion.

Cynics say the commission merely enables an unelected cabal of failed right-wing loonies and rich megalomaniacs like Henry Kissinger and George Bush to get together to work out how to rule the world. To them I would say that David Owen, a relative new boy in the House of Lords, seemed quite at home.

MARKING the efforts of Sir Nicholas and Lady Lloyd, editors of the *Daily* and *Sunday Express* titles, to boost Britain's moribund manufacturing sector, Grovel is delighted to announce a competition in their honour for the readers of *Private Eye*.

The generous couple are using their lofty positions to help the fashion and textile industries with something called the *Express* Design Competition. Readers of Sir Nicholas's daily have been asked to design a celebrity gown to be worn at Royal Ascot by one of Britain's biggest celebrities, none other than Lady Lloyd, aka Eve Pollard.

Grovel would like to extend the invitation to readers of this column. So grab pen and sketchbook, and design a voluptuous garment that does justice to milady's magnificent embonpoint.

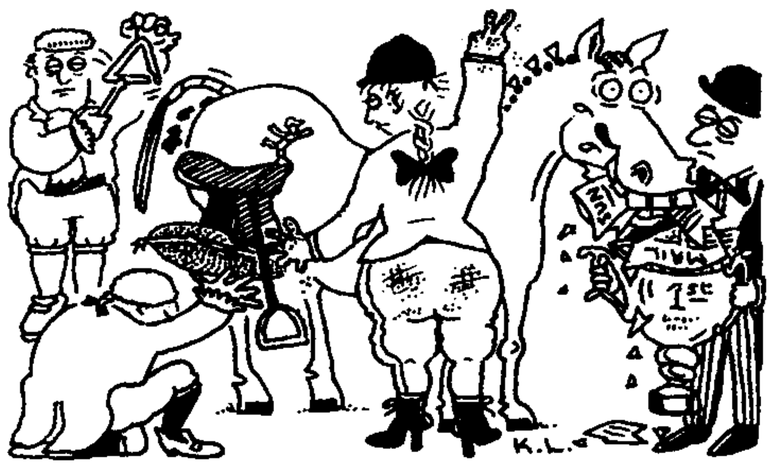
The designs will be reproduced in *Private Eye* and sent with our compliments to Lady Bollard. First prize will be a year's subscription to her *Sunday Express*; and second prize a year's subscription to both the *Sunday* and *Daily Express*. (A year's worth of *Private Eye* is available as an alternative.)

● *TIMES are hard and the annual accounts of the Groucho Club — whose 12-strong board includes such luminaries as Carmen Callil of Chatto & Windus, Matthew Evans of Faber and literary agent Ed Victor — make interesting reading.*

While reporting good results for the year to the end of May, the directors comment that they "do not expect the company to be able to reach the same level of profit in the year to 31 May 1993 as was achieved in this year". In anticipation of this downturn, the directors have acted with the decisiveness one would expect of so distinguished a group. Page nine of the accounts shows that the directors' remuneration has risen from £52,885 to £84,893 — a 62 per cent increase. Trebles all round!

"Oh, God — I've trodden in the Turner Prize"

Pseuds Corner



"I'm a real earth person, I *like* getting my hands dirty," she admits. "I like *people* and I like ordinariness. I don't like privilege. I like putting my own saddle on my horse."

It's an isolated, intensely private life, with extra-high security since John Lennon's assassination in 1980. Linda hasn't read a newspaper in years — not since she came across a story about a Liverpool boy who was sexually abused. "It haunts me to this day," she confides, eyes brimming.

LINDA McCARTNEY
Woman's Weekly

"...In order to at least maintain our market share of available work, to resource a high quality, dedicated specialist team, properly directed, focused and trained to produce quality efficient audits, quality distinctive reports and to maximise our fee resources..."

PRICE WATERHOUSE
Audit & Accounts Commission
Credo

I mean I read it [*Sex* by Madonna] as a kind of fantasy, I'm not going to read every line verbatim, you know, like the Bible, every single line; I got the whole thing as a kind of fantasy which sort of jolted me, I think it's extraordinary, I think it's the kind of book you would take — and whatever we all say in public — would anybody in the privacy of their own home think this sort of extraordinary, it sort of says things to you about yourself and I think that's an extraordinary thing.

MARCELLE D'ARGY SMITH
Channel Four

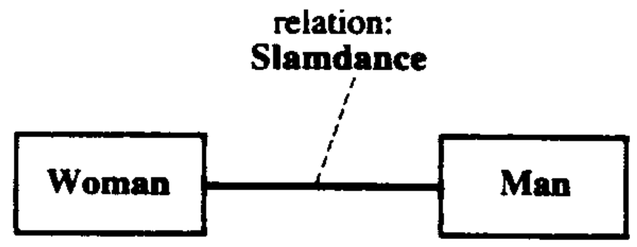


Figure 5. Two ways of expressing Slamdance Couple as a relation.

Journal of Object-Oriented Programming

This is part of my coming of age as a musician. I don't just want to be part of a genre. I'm not claiming to have been the Florence Nightingale of classical music. I want to be my own genre, the way Prince or Peter Gabriel or Kate Bush is.

NIGEL KENNEDY
Sunday Times

Like ambient music, old children's programmes don't intrude, don't make demands; for burnt-out brains, the medium is the massage. The Flintstones are the chill out room after the relentless techno of adult life.

MARK EDWARDS
Sunday Times

CONTRIBUTORS: John F.L. Nicholson, Anon, John Tristrum, Peter Goode, Anon, Anon.

£10 paid for entries

I GATHER from a report in the *Sunday Torygraph* business section that Sir James Goldsmith and Kerry Packer are investing in a new magazine publishing company to be run by Liz Rees-Jones, former chief of Murdoch Magazines.

While Rees-Jones was described somewhat fancifully as "one of the most talented names in women's magazine publishing", strangely her list of magazine credits judiciously omitted any reference to the disaster of *Mirabella*.

Nor was there any mention that Rees-Jones is the former mistress and now partner of *Sunday Times* deputy editor Ivan Fallon. And it is a pure coincidence that Fallon recently wrote a sycophantic biography of Sir Jams.

He, of course, is not the only Goldsmith hagiographer to have received favours. Godfrey Wansell, who wrote two different biographies of Goldsmith, persuaded the billionaire to invest a couple of hundred thousand pounds in a feature film with an ecological theme that he produced.

MY FRIEND Jane Procter, editor of *Tatler*, behaved with impeccable decorum on a recent freebie to the American Virgin Island of St Thomas, in the Caribbean.

***Tatler* had been given a freebie flight and accommodation to take photos of Anouska Hempel's new fashion collection at the Grand Palazzo Hotel. The hoteliers, a Geordie couple called Mike and Lynn Pemberton, spent £70,000 on air tickets to fly various friends of Hempel's out there, including Charles and Pandora Delevigne, Hilary Weston (wife of food magnate Garfield Weston), Gina Sopwith, and Princess Ira von Furstenburg.**

The first sign of trouble came when Procter found she was seated in club class while Hempel's friends were in first. Procter insisted she be upgraded or she would refuse to go. Alas, the forward section was full and Procter had to make do with the un*Tatler*y company of the hoi polloi. Cauchemar!

The flirtatious Procter, known as "The Purley Queen" because of her less than top-drawer upbringing in Surrey, more than made up for it on arrival. She was tired and emotional for much of the time, and on the Saturday night there was a high-spirited party at which several guests jumped into the pool fully-clothed. Procter straddled the shoulders of Lord Ivor Mountbatten and took part in some aqua-jousting against the Delevignes — just the sort of thing adolescent toffs are photographed doing at parties in *Tatler*'s Bystander column.

Disaster almost struck towards the end of the trip when the *Tatler* stylist was telephoned by Hempel's PR, who told her that a string of pearls had gone missing. Luckily, these were tracked down to Procter, who explained she had taken them back to her room because she thought they belonged to Hilary Weston and intended to return them to her.

Phew!

● *CONGRATULATIONS to Melvyn Bragg, who has made a quick killing of £10,000 by selling some photographs of himself and his wife Cate Haste to Hello! magazine.*

His wife was unhappy about Hello!'s photographers capturing the Braggs' domestic interiors, so the shoot took place instead at the Holiday Inn hotel in Swiss Cottage. When the publisher of Hello! saw the pictures he expressed dismay that his editor had chosen such a low-grade celebrity and tried to withdraw the offer. But the cheque had been issued and cashed. The feature will not be running and the photos have been sent to the Braggs as souvenirs.

Pip Pip!

NOOKS and CORNERS

I AM GLAD this column was quoted in the recent debate in the House of Lords on the future of English Heritage. That, of course, is as it should be: sanity begins here.

But over Jocelyn Stevens's proposals to savage English Heritage, we seem to be part of a broad consensus: one of outrage. Is Piranha Teeth losing his marbles? He suddenly seems rather pathetic in his bellicose ineptitude. Ever since, when his appointment was announced, he publicly criticised English Heritage over its determined stand over Peter Palumbo's ambitions for the Mansion House site and instead supported his sinister crony, it was clear that he failed to understand what the organisation was *for*. Now he must realise that directing a quango dedicated to protecting historic buildings is a rather different kettle of fish to running a school of art or, for that matter, a glossy fashion mag.

How can he have thought that the idea of disposing of properties brought into care after decades of effort and negotiations could be regarded by the general public with anything but dismay? How can he have thought that the proposal to give more control over historic buildings to such institutionalised barbarians as the London boroughs of Hackney or Bexley could be greeted with anything but horror? Who advised him that change would be easy? Why, those career civil servants who always hated the anomaly of the superior powers of the London Division and who cannot bear to manage an organisation that consists of anything other than managers. Perhaps it is time Mr Stevens turned his sharpened teeth on them...

Meanwhile, the best response to this crisis has come from SAVE Britain's Heritage in a document called *Sack the Management Not the Monuments*. This endorses my view that, *pace* the egregious chairman of the Arts Council and his posturing obsession with "excellence", "the best buildings are not the most threatened" and that "EH's London Division (the former historic buildings division of the Greater London Council...) represented precisely the kind of multi-disciplinary team EH should have set up immediately in eight or nine regions. Yet the London Division has been emasculated..." SAVE points out that the Stevens proposals to emascuLate the London Division are flawed as they fail to recognise the special pressures operating in a capital city.

But SAVE rightly points out that English Heritage itself has been flawed from the beginning, as it has tried to both protect historic buildings through listing, advice, control and grant aid, while also looking after specific monuments in its care. The answer is simple: "EH should be given the sole task of looking after properties in care. All other activities should be taken back under the wing of the new Department of National Heritage." Will this happen? Of course not — not while we have a government of philistine incompetents who — along with Piranha Teeth himself — are most anxious not to impede influential friends like My Lord Palumbo by actively protecting our finite stock of beautiful and historic buildings.

'Piloti'

HERITAGE NEWS

CLENCHED teeth and tight lips were on display at the genteel National Trust when Jocelyn Stevens dropped his bombshell that English Heritage planned to hive-off more than 200 ancient monuments (see last *Eye*'s Nooks & Corners).

Even though the two organisations have joint interests in 17 sites — including the White Horse in Oxfordshire, Fountains Abbey near Ripon and Housesteads at Hadrian's Wall — English Heritage had spoken not a word about its plans to the National Trust.

Angry that no hint of the impending announcement had been dropped at the two bodies' regular meetings, the trust demanded an urgent meeting with Stevens, after which a joint statement announced merely that the 17 sites would be the subject of discussions over the coming year.

Although anxious to play down reports of a row, National Trust officials have let it be known that they are still completely in the dark about what English Heritage plans to do with the nation's heritage. Expect blood on the tapestried walls when they find out...

COLIN WALLACE

IN THE week that the home office receives a petition on behalf of former Northern Ireland army information officer Colin Wallace providing new evidence that he is innocent of the killing of his friend Jonathan Lewis — a petition supported by two barristers and a large number of MPs — grave doubts are being expressed in BAA plc about Wallace's sudden redundancy earlier this year.

Wallace was taken on by BAA in 1987 under the firm's progressive policy of employing former prisoners.

In 1990 he became a senior manager of BAA's prestigious management training centre at Pease Pottage. Wallace worked there with the same dedication that had won the respect of his fellow-officers in the army. He regularly got up at 5am and didn't get home until late at night — and all for a salary, without overtime, of £15,000 a year.

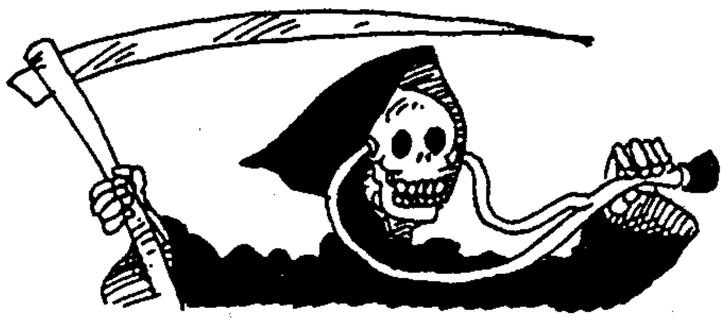
The company made it clear that as long as he did not allow his case to interfere with his work, he could continue to campaign against what he told them was his arbitrary and unfair sacking from the army in 1975 and against his wrongful conviction for Lewis's killing in 1980 — for which he got 10 years, serving just over six.

In 1990 Wallace's first claim — that he was wrongly dismissed from the army — was vindicated after a high-level secret inquiry. He was awarded £30,000 compensation. Early this year the relatively benevolent chairman of BAA, Sir Norman Payne, retired, leaving the company in control of its arch-Thatcherite chief executive, Sir John Egan.

Wallace continued to give interviews about his case. Shortly before the election he went on *Channel Four News* to talk about the strange theft of confidential papers from the offices of the lawyers of Paddy Ashdown, leader of the Liberal Democrats. He compared the theft to many other mysterious break-ins affecting senior politicians during the elections of 1974.

Earlier this year, BAA appointed a new chief internal auditor, Catherine Howard. Wallace was made redundant.

No complaint was made about his work. His redundancy was announced as if it were a natural consequence of BAA's policy of Sacking People to Make More Profits, a central feature of Sir John Egan's management strategy. Wallace's colleagues at the centre, however, noted that no jobs were being saved. No doubt there is an innocent explanation.



DOING THE ROUNDS

COMPLAINTS about the London Ambulance Service continue to flood in, despite assurances that everything is back to normal after the fatal computer debacle. In Wimbledon, a three-week-old with a suspected ruptured bowel had to be sent to hospital in a taxi after waiting 45 minutes, and two elderly patients, with intestinal obstruction and a wrist fracture, waited seven hours before their ambulances arrived.

In **Chippenham, Wiltshire**, the ambulance training centre has been converted into a conference venue with 40 bedrooms (each with TV), a bar and a gym.

● ED MCNALLY, chief executive of **Taunton and Somerset NHS Trust**, has dismissed the disclosure that the hospital is £200,000 in debt (*Eye* 804) as "chicken feed". No doubt Mr McNally would also view the backpay owed to eight nursing auxiliaries who have been undergraded since 1988 as chicken feed (*Eye* 798). Their tribunal victory was more than six months ago, but despite assurances from Ann Cooley, director of nursing and patient services, they have yet to receive a penny. Ms Cooley evidently has great faith in her NHS staff — she recently disappeared to the private Parkside wing to have an operation.

● ANOTHER senior manager suffering from trust mistrust is Anne Lloyd, chief executive of **Bristol's Frenchay Trust**, who consults a private specialist at the **BUPA Glen** hospital rather than use her own services. Elsewhere in **Bristol, Southmead NHS Trust**, already £1 million over-spend and having to close wards and offer voluntary redundancies, is paying a working group to "field test value statements" in nursing services. Questions include: "Do value statements adequately reflect the values contained within the elements of the value statements?" Answers by fax to 0275 375254...

At the **Bristol Royal Infirmary**, part of the **United Bristol Healthcare Trust (UBHT)**, ward closures and patient transfers have been planned to make the surviving wards look full, thus giving the impression that business is booming. Such imaginative management has resulted in UBHT being awarded a citizen's charter mark, despite its precarious paediatric cardiac surgery unit (*Eyes passim*). All-day celebrations were generously sponsored by the trustees and a commemorative lapel badge is being commissioned for staff to wear with pride. Curiously, UBHT just happens to be plum in the middle of citizen's charter supremo and ex-health secretary William Waldegrave's constituency.

● AT THE TV-friendly **St James NHS Trust** in **Leeds** (aka "Jimmy's"), a consultant paediatric surgeon has resigned having failed to convince managers of serious deficiencies in the unit's facilities. Instead of centralising resources and expertise on one site, nearby trusts are competing for sick children with the net result that services are scattered, confused and patchy in quality.

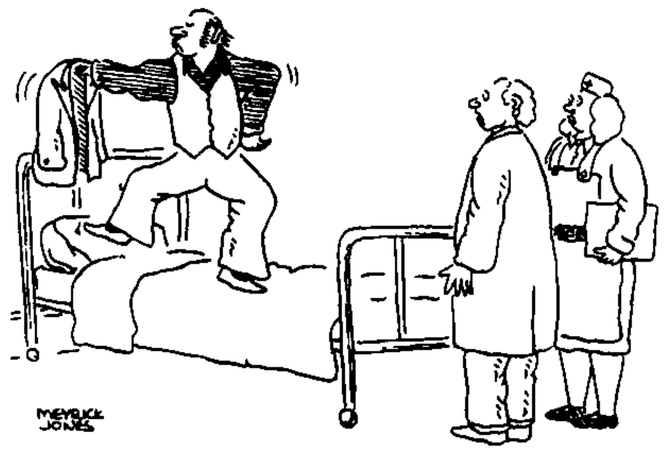
Nearby **Stockport** health authority is counting the cost of failure to secure trust status. The unsuccessful bid, including champagne celebrations, cost £200,000 and service cuts will now follow.

● AT **LONDON'S St George's hospital**, a £5.8 million budget shortfall has not been helped by a recent fire that destroyed the radiation protection unit and part of the cardiology wards. Problems, too, in the accident and emergency department where the two sparring consultants communicate by passing notes to each other under the door. Elsewhere in London, **Riverside health authority** spent thousands on printing signs and letterheads for the new **Westminster and Chelsea hospital** before concluding retrospectively that "WC" is not a fitting logo for their multi-million venture.

● COLONEL Stephen Miller, the army plastic surgeon whose specialist training was rejected by the **Royal College of Surgeons** because "we don't want private practice slipping into army hands" (*Eye* 798), has won a high court plea for a further hearing.

Colonel Miller needs to have his training accredited by the RCS to register as a specialist and practise privately. Despite initial assurances that his training in Cambridge and Norwich would be recognised, the RCS subsequently withdrew its approval and refused to acknowledge his work at **Stoke Mandeville** hospital or his five-month stint treating burns in the Gulf war. Justice Otton ruled that Colonel Miller's treatment by the royal college was "shabby". The case continues...

'M.D.'



"It's the worst case of Saturday Night Fever I've seen for years"

EYE TV

News At Ten (ITN)

IT IS commonly thought that the main difference between British and American television news is in the style of presentation.

The British newsreader has always been open to the accusation of being an overpaid mouthpiece, a dummy with a dress allowance who reads lines written by someone else and, with the broad status of a concert hall MC, introduces pieces by the real artists out in the field.

To stress the distinction between announcers and journos, the first BBC newsreaders were jobbing showbiz types like Michael Aspel and Richard Baker. In contrast an American anchorman — Walter Cronkite and John Chancellor being the first, succeeded now by Tom Brokaw, Peter Jennings and Dan Rather — was a former senior journalist (often the White House correspondent), who sat alone at a large desk, like the head of the spy network in one of those 60s TV espionage series.

The correspondents whom he magicked up from around the world were tangibly his underlings. In one of the most famous mannerisms of American broadcasting, the anchorman would initiate first-name exchanges with the reporters. "Jim, a bad day for the president?" / "Tom, he's known better... at the end of the day, the economy remains the big issue." The job of anchorman was somewhere around that of president in national prestige.

However, the real distinction of American news bulletins — and the gap Ted Turner's CNN cleverly filled — has always been the limited amount of news they contained. After the Tom-Jim two-way on the top story of the day, the programme usually switched to general human interest feature material, under a generic headline like "Focus USA", "Close Up America" or "The American Agenda".

These were pseudo-news stories like "Detroit man finds new way of slicing potatoes" and "Why you'll have less time waiting in line next time you call at the bank..." And, crucially, even for the top story of the day, the close-up was on America, the focus USA. Foreign stories only made the cut if there was specific domestic involvement.

Thus, although most attention towards the new-look *News At Ten* has focused on the use of a solo host — Trevor Macdonald at the wide desk — the real story is ITN's apparent adoption of American news attitudes in place of the educate-and-explain values inherited from the BBC. British news had, anyway, already moved towards pseudo-anchormen with the replacement of the Baker-Woods-Rippon generation by reformed reporters like Alastair Burnet,

CATCHPHRASE
This Week Tv consumer guide presenter Molly McGrath
"This Teddy could take a child's eye out"
ROBERT THOMPSON

Alastair Stewart, Michael Buerk and Martyn Lewis.

Trevor Macdonald will — on the first week's evidence — merely be the matiest of this strain. Note how his intros to films drop the standard stern third-person tone — "A new development in X-ray technology is..." — for the buttonholing: "If you've ever been knocked down and gone to hospital, you'll know how lengthy the wait for an X-ray can be..."

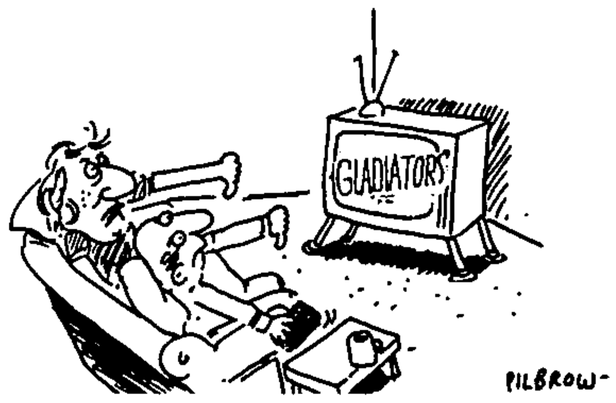
What matters more than the tone, though, is that this half-story of a medical technology breakthrough is typical of the featury squibs that filled two thirds of each edition of *News At Ten* in the first week of the new regime. "Here's looking at you, babe — thanks to British technology...!", mugged Macdonald in introduction. A new videophone, made by Blighty scientists, would allow you to send your relatives overseas a living picture of your tot. More serious, but equally shallowly attention-grabbing, was "On patrol with the Belfast Bomb Squad — Playing Cat and Mouse with the IRA", in which Northern Irish politics was reduced to a sequel to *Top Gun*. Halfway through the programme, teaser captions like "Hero Gran", summarising coming items, beg the viewer not to switch over.

This is the *real* Americanisation of the bulletin. Other evidence from the first week is the treatment of international subjects. South Africa crept in, but only under cover of a feature package about violent crime (domestic burglary, wouldn't you know, not the activities of the security forces). The former Yugoslavia made the menu, in the form of a report from the road with Our Boys. This stuff had the astonishing effect of making you yearn for lengthy Birtian analysis.

Paradoxically the American element which had been most talked about — Macdonald as "anchorman" — is the most half-hearted. Certainly the presenter gets to do at least one first-name interrogation of a reporter — "Peter, is the news of the re-emergence of Ray McSharry in the negotiating process welcomed at Westminster?" / "Trevor, I think it is..." — but, in order to juggle the egos of its senior staff, *News At Ten* has adopted a curious system of sub-anchors. Macdonald introduces Julia Somerville with something called "Focus on Britain", but she, in turn, merely cues up a report by Lawrence McGinty on drug abuse.

On the night of the autumn statement, Macdonald introduced Alastair Stewart, shivering outside Number 10, who in turn interviewed Michael Brunson, the ITN political editor. Why couldn't Trevor have introduced McGinty's film or interviewed Brunson? He ought to get on to his agent. Brokaw, Jennings and Rather would never have stood for such clumsy democracy. Having copied the trivial agenda of American news shows so perfectly, it's a pity *News At Ten* flunked the trappings.

'Square Eyes'



MEDIA NEWS

THE CORRIDORS of BBC Television were loud with recriminations this week following a battle over the amply-proportioned figure of Chris Patten.

The governor of Hong Kong, who was on a visit to London, had a long-standing arrangement to give an "exclusive interview" on Monday morning to *Behind the Headlines*, which was to be transmitted that afternoon. Come Monday morning, however, there was no sign of His Excellency at the White City studio. It transpired that he was at the west London house of Jonathan Dimbleby.

Panic-stricken flunkeys from *Behind the Headlines* raced to Dimbleby's address only to find the door barred to them: the governor, they were told, couldn't see them because he was at that very moment recording an interview in the drawing-room for a BBC documentary Dimblebore is making about Hong Kong.

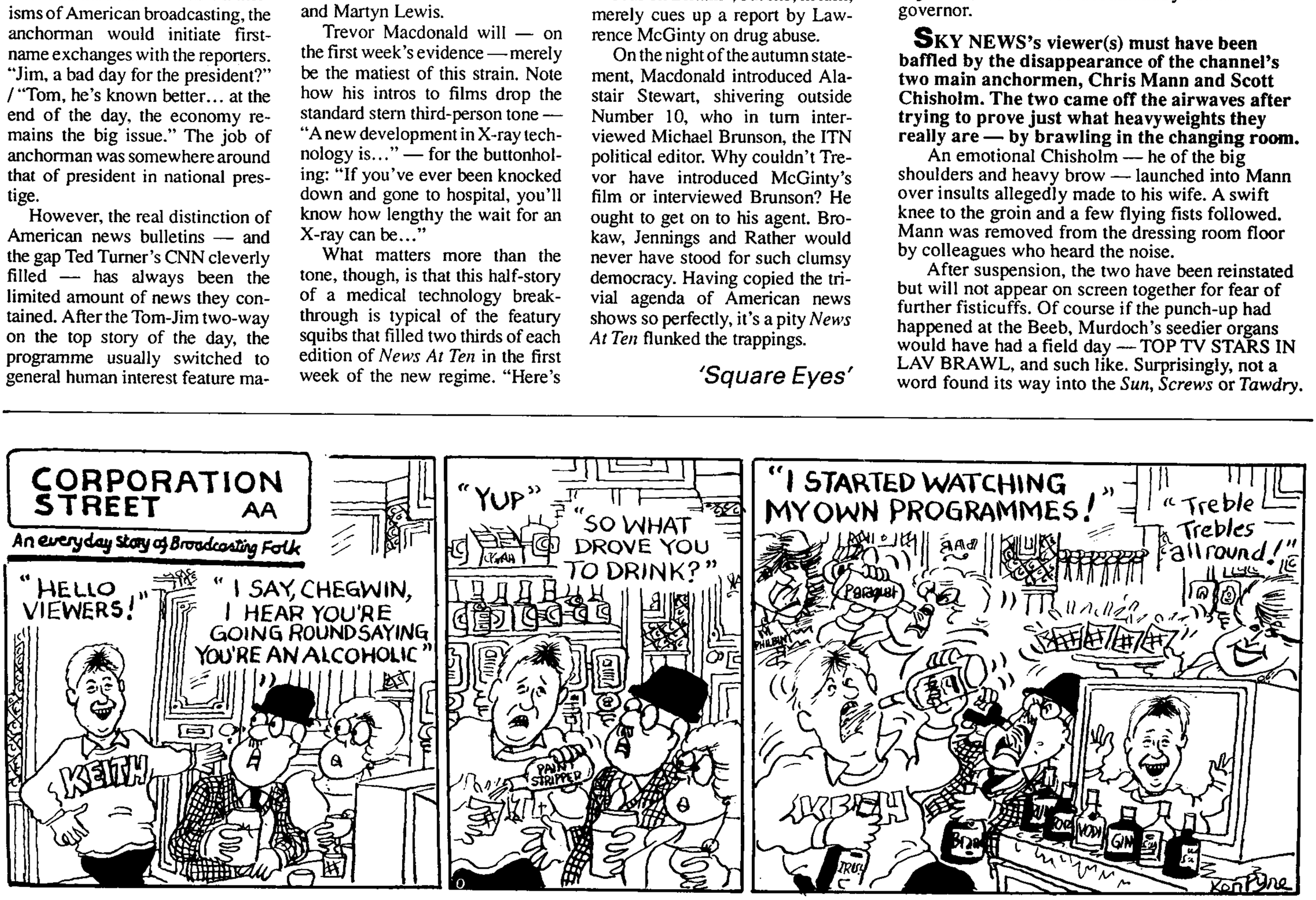
The indignant *Behind the Headlines* team pointed out that Patten had promised to appear on their programme; besides, Dimbleby will have plenty of other opportunities, since his film is not due to be shown until 1997. To no avail. With only hours to go until transmission, *Behind the Headlines* had to cobble together a completely new show. Meanwhile, thousands of pounds had been wasted on preparing for the Patten interview. This, presumably, is what John Birt means by "producer choice".

Dimbleby's success in "poaching" Patten may not be unrelated to the fact that the two men are close friends. They were near neighbours in Bath for several years, and have holidayed together in France. He is, clearly, just the chap to make an objective, fair-minded documentary about the governor.

SKY NEWS's viewer(s) must have been baffled by the disappearance of the channel's two main anchormen, Chris Mann and Scott Chisholm. The two came off the airwaves after trying to prove just what heavyweights they really are — by brawling in the changing room.

An emotional Chisholm — he of the big shoulders and heavy brow — launched into Mann over insults allegedly made to his wife. A swift knee to the groin and a few flying fists followed. Mann was removed from the dressing room floor by colleagues who heard the noise.

After suspension, the two have been reinstated but will not appear on screen together for fear of further fisticuffs. Of course if the punch-up had happened at the Beeb, Murdoch's seedier organs would have had a field day — TOP TV STARS IN LAV BRAWL, and such like. Surprisingly, not a word found its way into the *Sun*, *Screws* or *Tawdry*.



LUVVIES

"He was one of the worst dressed people at RADA," says John Sessions. "He wore anoraks, bad jeans and the sort of shoes you'd buy from a chainstore."

Profile of KENNETH BRANAGH
The Guardian

... at the Almeida, Pinter falls once, gets up, falls again in a corkscrew fashion, and crawls out the door on all fours. As theatre, it is almost unbearably exciting.

MICHAEL COVENEY
Observer

Submitted by Nicholas Murray, Chris Watmore.

An occasional column featuring gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for entries printed.

CHANNEL 4's Michael Grade and LWT's *Greg* Dyke are by no means the only fatcats in ITV.

Because of the nature of the franchise-round, whereby some companies won franchises with meagre bids because they had no competition, some of the senior executives of those companies are on the way to becoming extremely rich while their staffs are beset with redundancies.

Take, for example, Gus Macdonald, managing director of STV since 1990, who cut his teeth at Granada back in the 1960s and '70s and is remembered for his Stalinist political views.

Macdonald receives a salary of £234,000 a year. He also received a bonus of £250,000 for winning the main Scottish franchise for a mere £20,000. He recently sold 160,000 STV shares, reaping a profit of £466,000. In addition, it should not be forgotten that according to the 1988 accounts the company authorised the purchase of a substantial property in the West End of Glasgow for £120,000 and it was agreed that Macdonald could rent this house at a commercial rent with an option to buy at cost plus inflation when he wished to do so. Despite the nationwide drop in property prices, the value of the house is now estimated to be around £300,000.

At Border Television, the franchise-holder for the north-western region, the shareholders have benefited from a £1.2 million profit this year. Nevertheless, there has been a wages freeze since July which is expected to continue next year and 30 staff have been asked to volunteer for redundancy. Meanwhile Border's managing director, Jim Graham, has had a £60,000 pay rise, while company secretary Peter Brownlow has seen his salary leap to £90,000 a year.

However, when chairman Melvyn Bragg recently proposed that he should be made an executive chairman and paid a proper salary instead of the miserly £1,000 he receives for attending board meetings, the other directors rebuffed him.

THE LAST *Eye* carried a letter from Ruth Caleb, producer of the drama series *Civvies*, angrily denying our suggestion that her "expert adviser" on the series, Desmond Melbourne, had never been a Para himself.

"Desmond Melbourne was in the Parachute Regiment — however he was not an officer and a gentleman but a sergeant," she wrote. "Perhaps this is what irks."

Poor old Caleb has been misinformed. After her letter appeared, the Parachute Regiment checked the computer which holds the records of everyone who has served in any branch of the British army. No Desmond Melbourne has ever served in the Parachute Regiment, whether as a sergeant or anything else. They discovered that Desmond Melbourne was a Warrant Officer (2nd Class) in the Queen's Colour Section of the RAF Regiment. For about 18 months. He was subsequently a volunteer in the 157th (Wales & Midland) Transport Regiment of the Royal Corps of Transport (Territorial Army). This is his longest and most recent military experience.

"It was not exactly a glamour post," another transport volunteer told the *Eye* this week. Melbourne's duties mainly involved driving lorries. He was not a conspicuously successful soldier and his superior officer sometimes had to discipline him for fighting. "Really, if they are relying on Dessie Melbourne for military advice then God help us," says one ex-colleague.

HACKWATCH No 33: Kenneth Rose

IF THE government does eventually introduce a privacy law, there is at least one gossip columnist who will be serenely unhampered by it — Kenneth Rose, whose "Albany at Large" column has been appearing in the *Sunday Telegraph* for longer than anyone can remember.

It is a gossip column for people who disapprove of gossip. Admiring readers include the Queen (who entrusted Rose with the task of writing her grandfather's official biography), the provost of Eton (where Rose used to be a schoolmaster) and Lord Rothschild (whose authorised family history Rose is now writing). Their approval is understandable; for they are also the main subjects of "Albany at Large", where they are always treated most reverentially. Sometimes, by way of variety, Rose writes flattering paragraphs about British ambassadors, usually when they are about to retire. The diplomatic services therefore loves him, too.

It is hard, however, to see why anyone else should read Rose's column — still less why the *Sunday Telegraph* has kept it alive for so long, years after it slumped into irreversible coma. Anyone suffering from insomnia could profitably study the following highlights:

1 March: General Sir John Richards, Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps, is retiring. Ambassadors in London "are showing their appreciation of his tact and friendliness with a series of sumptuous dinners". Meanwhile, the provost and fellows of Eton have decided not to erect a statue on Fellows Eyot, "a pleasant meadow near College Chapel that commands a fine view of the river and Windsor Castle".

15 March: Lord Rothschild is restoring Waddesdon. The house "was completed just over a century ago in the style of the French Renaissance by Baron Ferdinand de Rothschild, who filled it with an Aladdin's cave of works of art. These have been catalogued in a series of sumptuous volumes."

29 March: "The Queen has 30 horses in training for the new flat-racing season which has just opened, five fewer than last year. All but five are trained by Lord Huntingdon (Peter Hastings-Bass), the remainder by Ian Balding."

12 April: "Sir Kenneth James, formerly our man in Mexico, is retiring after five years as director-general of Canning House, the institute in Belgrave Square that maintains good relations with Latin America and the Iberian peninsula. He is to be succeeded by another ex-ambassador to Mexico, Sir Michael Simpson-Orlebar."

26 April: When the Sultan of Brunei visits London in November, "one of the first to greet the Sultan will be the Lord Lieutenant of Greater London, Field-Marshal Lord Bramall".

3 May: A Holbein picture, sold to the National Gallery by Lord Cholmondeley, has gone on view to the public. "Those who knew his grandmother, Sybil Marchioness of Cholmondeley, will be doubly pleased at the acquisition of this lovely painting by the nation."

31 May: Sir Stephen Egerton, the British ambassador to Italy, "who has leavened the arts of diplomacy with humour and panache", is to be also accredited as non-resident ambassador to Albania. Meanwhile Egerton's old prep school, Summer Fields, has carried off seven scholarships to Eton. "Such a high rate of success is an established school tradition," Rose notes.

7 June: Eton hopes to build a rowing lake. "Some dedicated wet-bobs have already decided that they would like the new lake to be called after Hubert Hartley, the beak who did so much for Eton rowing."

14 June: A scoop: "Sir Christopher Mallaby, I hear, has been chosen to succeed Sir Ewen Fergusson as our ambassador in Paris." Mallaby, Rose adds, was a King's scholar at Eton.

28 June: Rose leads his column with another scoop: "The Queen is to give a luncheon party at Buckingham Palace on 9 July to mark the 90th anniversary of the Order of Merit."

5 July: William Waldegrave, Rose reveals, possesses two of Disraeli's despatch boxes. "They were bequeathed to him by the late Lord Rothschild." Meanwhile, Rose points out that a Rembrandt which is soon to be sold by Sotheby's, "was acquired in the mid-19th century by Baron Mayer de Rothschild, who commissioned Paxton to build Mentmore and won the 1871 Derby with Favonius."

19 July: The Queen has made Prince Michael of Kent a Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order. The Prince, Rose notes, has "charming manners".

26 July: Rose attends a garden party at Buckingham Palace, where he enjoys "a sumptuous tea" and listens to the band of the Coldstream Guards playing *The Eton Boating Song*.

2 August: To celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Queen's reign, Lord Rothschild invites Rose to dinner. They enjoy a "sumptuous feast".

30 August: "I travelled back from Germany last week with the saintly and delightful Fr Edward Corbould, a housemaster at Ampleforth. We had both been staying with Commander-in-Chief Rhine Army, General Sir Charles Guthrie, and Lady Guthrie."

13 September: The headmaster of Uppingham has abolished the black ties which pupils there have worn since Queen Victoria's death. This gives Rose a splendid excuse for mentioning a certain other public school: "Eton meanwhile continues to mourn the death of King George III with black tail coats and white tie, relieved only by the coloured waistcoats and buttonholes of members of Pop."

20 September: "Sir Timothy Daunt, I hear, is coming home from Turkey, where he has been our man in Ankara since 1986." Rose uses the occasion to remind us that Sir Christopher Mallaby will shortly succeed Sir Ewen Fergusson as ambassador in Paris.

4 October: A painting which has just been stolen from Lord Cholmondeley "was inherited by the present peer's grandmother, Sybil Lady Cholmondeley... whose mother was a French Rothschild".

18 October: "As Lord Lieutenant of Greater London, Field Marshal Lord Bramall, with Lady Bramall, gave a sumptuous dinner in Westminster City Hall last week."

8 November: Lord Rothschild has been visiting Moscow. Rose recalls that, a century ago, Rothschild's great-great-grandfather, Baron Lionel de Rothschild, "financed the expansion of the Russian railways".

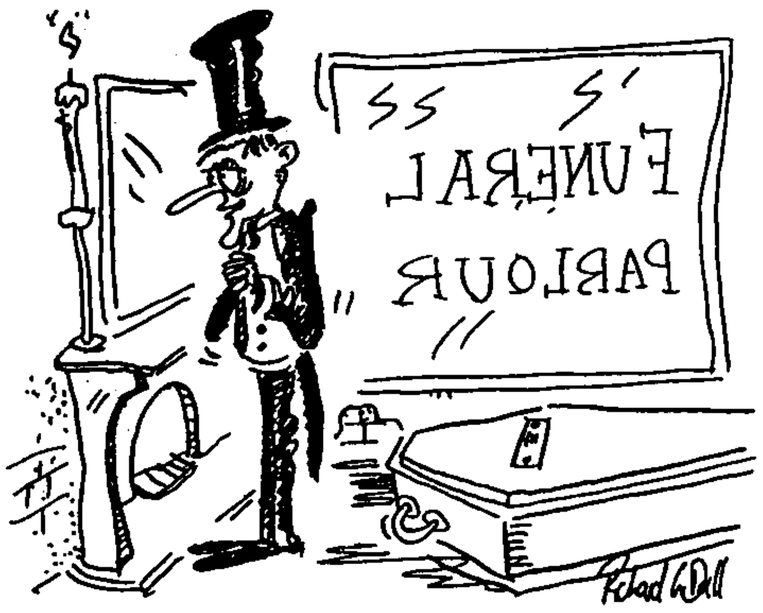
15 November: Rose reports on a new exhibition that has opened at Eton College, on "Eton and the First World War". He is most impressed.

I-BSkyB

An occasional column for which readers are invited to submit Sky-plugs in Murdoch papers. The usual £10 will be paid.

GEORGE AND LYNNE
I DON'T BELIEVE THIS NOVEMBER TOPLESS SCENE!
WHY NOT? IT'S IBIZA. IT'S 75° AND YOU'RE SEEING NOTHING NEW.
I KNOW – BUT WHERE ARE ALL THE FELLAS?
OH, THE MEN ARE ALL IN THE BAR WATCHING SKY SOCCER!

The Sun (Contributor: Miles Fentiman)



"Oh, I'm puttin' on my top hat..."

O·B·N

I know of one compelling anecdote to support this working woman definition of beauty. Some years ago I went to a private dinner at Downing Street. A friend of mine was sitting next to the then Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher.

The next day, my friend called me. I was expecting him to say: "Oh, my God. My nerves are in shreds. It was so harrowing." Instead, I'll never forget, he said: "You know, Stephen, she's really beautiful."

You can forget your slinky supermodels and pouting actresses. My face of the Nineties is Baroness Thatcher, a woman who gets more beautiful as she gets older. Here's a lesson for us all, and for Elle.

STEPHEN BAYLEY
Daily Mail

Submitted by Kenneth A. Fleming.

£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

LOONY TOONS

A.V.R. SMITH, a director of the loony right-wing group Western Goals, has been expelled from his positions in the World League for Freedom and Democracy, formerly the World Anti-Communist League, a propaganda organisation financed by the Taiwanese and South Koreans.

Smith was once a leading light in the Federation of Conservative Students before it was overhauled by Conservative Central Office, and has spent most of his adult life (he is 28) working for right-wing causes. At Western Goals he has been joint editor of *European Dawn*, a magazine of Western Goals and Young Europeans for World Freedom, and he helped organise London visits for the South African Conservative leader Dr Andries Treurnicht and president Cristiani of El Salvador.

There have been freebies galore, including lecture tours on behalf of Western Goals to southern Africa (paid for by the government of Bophuthatswana) and Central America. Another source of freebies, this time in South-East Asia, has been the World League for Freedom and Democracy, with which Smith has been connected since 1986 when he became deputy chairman of its UK Chapter, the British Freedom Council. In 1989 he became deputy secretary-general of the World Youth Freedom League and from 1990 an executive board member of the WLFD.

But there are signs that Smith's carefully-constructed carapace of right-wing respectability is crumbling. Dr Woo Jae-Seung, the WLFD's secretary-general, has written to tell him that the executive board recently resolved that "the World League should not associate with your good name in its programs in future, either as a member of the Youth League or representative of the UK Chapter" and that Smith "be excused from participating in all the activities of the League".

The reason for this delicately-worded dismissal was Smith's behaviour at World Freedom Day in Taiwan a few months ago. Like other delegates, Smith was invited by the Taiwanese government. He arrived in Taiwan from Manila in the company of a Filipino bar girl, whom he proceeded to put up in his hotel room, much to the annoyance of the Taiwanese and the embarrassment of the Philippines delegation.

SPY NEWS

THE *Independent* last week published a dramatic report from its Johannesburg correspondent of a bungled attempt by a right-wing "hit squad" to bump off Dirk Coetzee, a former South African policeman who now lives in Britain.

Two agents from South African military intelligence were despatched to London where they made contact with three rogue officers from the Royal Ulster Constabulary, who had been spying on Coetzee and now offered to "take him out". The plot fell apart when it was rumbled by British police.

The hit-team's main British contact was a certain Charles Simpson, who arranged their meeting with the RUC goons and was paid £2,000 by the South African police for his help in "monitoring the activities of Dirk Coetzee". Simpson then accompanied the two South Africans to another secret meeting in Northern Ireland, where "payment by means of the supply of Semtex explosives, weapons, night-vision equipment and electronic eavesdropping equipment was also discussed" in return for continued surveillance of the hapless Coetzee. (The quote comes from top-secret military intelligence documents which were presented in a South African court last week.)

Who is this Simpson? The *Independent* reported merely that he had served in the Rhodesian army in the late 1970s and worked in South Africa in the 1980s. But the *Eye* has discovered that, bizarrely, he is the manager of the Uxbridge bus garage in west London. "I have got no comment to make," he said when we approached him last week. "Who told you that I worked here?"

We then contacted Andrew Hunter, the right-wing Tory MP for Basingstoke, who met one of the South African agents soon after their arrival in London and who claims that he was unwittingly used by them as "cover". Does he know Charles Simpson? "I believe I have met him. I'm not quite sure, because different names are sometimes used," Hunter remarked mysteriously. Under further questioning, the MP's memory miraculously recovered. "I first met him in 1988. I believe he was in Rhodesia in the 1970s. But he never talked about his life in detail. I assumed he was providing information to the British intelligence services. I always assumed that when we had these contacts." What contacts? "I think you can take it that I have met Charles Simpson and that's really about all."

Simpson's employer, London Buses, said originally that it was "intrigued" by our revelation of his moonlighting activities: "Bus-garage managers seldom have time to sleep, let alone get up to this sort of thing." But an executive of London Buses later rang back with a more sober statement: "I and the directors are now aware of the issue as a result of your having drawn our attention to it. We are only interested in it insofar as it may impinge on the operation of our buses." So they are not bothered if one of their managers is hiring Ulster loyalists to spy on South African exiles and consorting with hit-squads who offer payment in Semtex explosives? "What he chooses to do in his spare time is his own business," London Buses replied.

DOWN ON THE FARM

with 'Old Muckspreader'

AS THIS column has been banging on about the malignant efforts of Jacques Delors and the European Commission for several years, Old Muck can only say of the GATT blockage that he or she told you so.

What Old Muck can add is that the exasperated farm commissioner Ray MacSharry sent a clipping from *Macbeth* to M Delors' office on the day that he blurted out the commission president's interference. His quote was:

"... we but teach/ Bloody instructions, which being taught return/ To plague the inventor./ This even-handed justice/ Commends the ingredience of our poisoned chalice/ To our own lips."

Perhaps Mr MacSharry will end up leading the Irish Republic, but M Delors' grave will be planted with oil seed rape and his heirs can harvest a subsidy in perpetuity.

That feeble fellow John Selwyn Gummer can do nothing but squeal. The headless MPs dithering over Maastricht did not even notice that Britain does not negotiate the GATT. The EC does it for us now.

THE Scottish Office's department of food and farming has been urged to change its name as the acronym "SODOFF" is the only reaction its staff get when proffering advice to the food traders and farmers of Scotland.

SCOTTISH Young Conservatives are not as foolish as their elders like to paint them. They have enunciated a bold policy to wean farmers off their whingeing and subsidy dependency with the cheeky idea that each farmer could be allowed to trade in his subvention claims in exchange for building two new homes on his land.

Scottish councils will normally only allow farmers to build new houses if they are exclusively for agricultural labour. As there are ever less farm workers this has proved a frustrating rule for everyone.

The Scottish Tories have surrendered their safest seats in the counties to the SLD and SNP, so it is no surprise that the Scottish Office minister rejects this clever wheeze out of hand.

WATCH out for a new outfit peddling falsehoods and fibs about land use. "Forests Forever" is a front body for the Timber Trade Federation.

Friends of the Earth, the World Wildlife Fund and Survival International are lobbying against timber imports. "Forests Forever" argues timber felling plays a negligible part in deforestation. They say natives' territory is never used for felling and that rare species are never felled illicitly for export to the UK. Fell the other one.

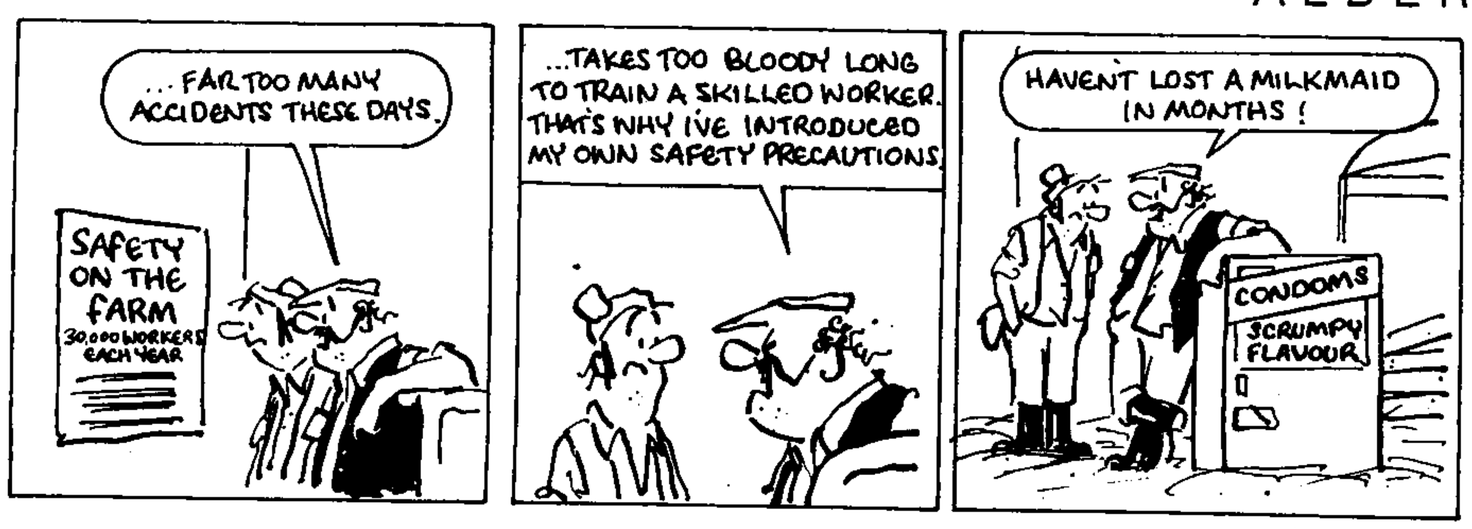
THE National Office of Animal Health Ltd (NOAH) has responded to complaints from a number of farmers' wives that their men glow in the dark with a briefing for politicians and sheep-reporting journalists that "organophosphorous sheep dips" are good for sheep and not too dangerous for sheep farmers.

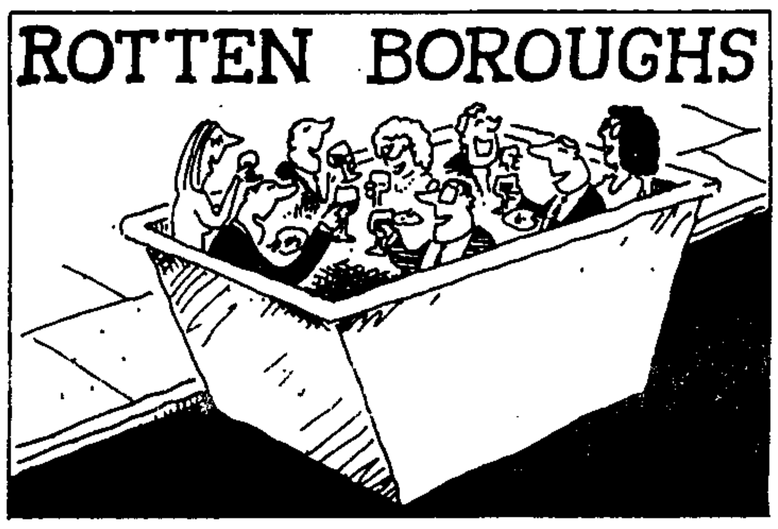
NOAH says the UK achieved "over 3 million man/dip events in the last 6.5 years and only 331 persons had suspected reactions" to the phosphorous. How on earth do they count them?

THE big outing for the Scottish Agricultural Discussion Society in most county towns is "My Way With Sheep". The meeting in Orkney was prudently cancelled in case mad social workers got too excited.

Old Macdonald

ALBERT


... FAR TOO MANY ACCIDENTS THESE DAYS.
SAFETY ON THE FARM
30,000 WORKERS EACH YEAR
...TAKES TOO BLOODY LONG TO TRAIN A SKILLED WORKER. THAT'S WHY I'VE INTRODUCED MY OWN SAFETY PRECAUTIONS.
HAVEN'T LOST A MILKMAID IN MONTHS!
CONDOMS
SCRUMPY FLAVOUR



BENT

BOB YOUNG, disgraced former housing director of England's biggest slum landlord, *Manchester* city council, has re-appeared in charge of Bent council's notorious Stonebridge Park housing estate.

This is a bit of a comedown for the debonair Young who was also once in charge of housing in Hackney. He now presides over the estate the tabloids dub, with some justification, as Britain's answer to LA's infamous Watts estate.

Yet Stonebridge residents are far from grateful at having so experienced an official at the helm. Indeed they are incensed at the appointment and claim in a newsletter — currently being perused by Messrs Sue, Grabbit and Runne — that Young was sacked by Manchester for incompetence. In fact he was removed by the council's revisionist leaders for being too left-wing.

Meanwhile a desperate attempt by Bent's ruling Tories to privatise every council service in sight by March 1994 and make the barmy borough the most zealously commercial in Britain are floundering.

A damning report by the Audit Commission has exposed the unscrupulous way the council has been handing council services to the private sector. According to the district auditor, when Bent recently privatised its rubbish collection — easily the council's biggest export — the process was "flawed and open to corruption".

Although few right-minded people outside Bent town hall would argue that the council's in-house team could do *anything*, including collecting rubbish, without causing complete chaos, Bent snubbed the council's own team on the grounds of "quality threshold" without revealing what that threshold was.

Bent handed the contract to French firm Onyx, even though it failed to submit the cheapest bid, a move the unions claim was politically biased so that privatisation could take place.

BIRMINGHAM

THE CITY'S gang of faded socialists have been hitting the jackpot recently as they try to feather their nests against a likely fall from power at the next elections.

Labour deputy leader Ken Barton made a saintly exit, declaring that he was standing down because politics had got "so bitter". He forgot to mention his likely deselection — or the cosy sinecure awaiting him. Thanks to a nomination from council leader Sir "Dick" Knowles, he will earn £18,000 for just two days' work a week as vice chair of Castle Vale Housing Action Trust.

(The trade-off between Knowles and the government was that the chairmanship should go to Sir Anthony Beaumont-Dark, the ex-rent-a-quote Tory MP for Selly Oak and another former city councillor. He will receive £35,000 a year for three days a week.)

The biggest stake of all is being played for by Coun Mike "evil" Hepburn — so called because of his bloodshot eyes and Spock-like ears. He works for West Birmingham health authority and, completely contrary to Labour policy, supports the creation of NHS trusts. In fact he has even — very secretly — submitted an "expression of interest" to health secretary Virginia Bottomley to take the community health services in the north, east and west Birmingham districts into a trust. It would spend about £50 million a year, with Hilburn no doubt heading it on an appropriately comfortable salary.

The bid coincides with moves to oust him by Northfield Labour party and with likely changes by the Boundary Commission that could see his ward wiped out anyway. This is not the first time Hilburn has found his interests in conflict with those of fellow socialists. Several years ago a search of the share lists of privatised industries found the good socialist Hilburn had bought 300 cut-price shares in Severn Trent Water. This was at a time when Hilburn, then as now chairman of the public health committee, was publicly backing a vastly expensive court action by the city against Severn Trent to recover assets and at a time when supporting privatisation by buying shares was close to blasphemy.

LAMBETH

LAMBETH, one of Britain's poorest boroughs with debts of more than £150 million, has revealed that it paid a town hall housing officer, Emma Lewis, £100,000 over five years to stay at home and do nothing.

This followed her *un*successful charge of racial discrimination against the ultra-Spartish south London borough. She had complained that she had not been promoted on racial grounds; but despite losing her case at an industrial tribunal a council grievance panel overturned the decision, awarded her undisclosed costs and ordered her to be offered a job at a higher level.

Unfortunately Lambeth's goodwill failed to placate Lewis. She turned down a succession of alternative job offers, claiming that they were not suitable, and stayed home for five years on full annual salary of £20,000, until recently accepting an undisclosed redundancy package.

Only after the fiasco had emerged did council leader Steve Whaley claim that tighter procedures have been adopted to stop similar waste occurring again. But who will believe him?

Eleven of Lambeth's top brass recently held a strategic planning conference at the £99-a-night Lane End conference centre in High Wycombe — 30 miles away from the grotty borough — to discuss... the council's mounting debt crisis!

BURY

AN INNOCENT jest in the *Eye* has caused all sorts of problems in Bury, Greater Manchester, home of the black pudding and victim of the biggest BCCI loss of any council in England.

The Labour-controlled borough suspended Rob McLoughlin, a full-time union representative and occasional social worker, after cartoons appeared on town hall walls lampooning council leader Colin Jones and describing Bury's finance director, Brian Smallridge, as Brian "Smallbrain", a monicker that first appeared in the *Eye*.

The description would seem justified given that Bury lost £6.5 million when the Bank of Credit and Commerce International collapsed last year; and the cartoons were merely a response from aggrieved employees to the news that the council was delaying paying workers until the end of the month to save a few thousand pounds.

But Bury's humourless reaction cut little ice with the industrial tribunal that heard McLoughlin's appeal against suspension — it ordered the council to reinstate him.

HAMMERSMITH

CRAFTY political opportunism by Labour-run Hammersmith and Fulham council has been rumbled by sharp-eyed members of the borough.

The council, notorious for its "illegal" lease-and-leaseback scam five years ago, is now deploying underhand tactics to sell off its schools stock. Last year it closed Harwood primary school, one of the old London county council's "sunshine schools", built in 1928 with windows angled to take best advantage of daylight. Harwood, also used by a variety of groups as a community education centre, was in excellent condition.

The council placated disgruntled locals and parents opposed to the closure promising that another primary, St John's, would be moving from its horrendous Dawes Road site in Fulham, where it didn't even have indoor lavatories, and taking over Harwood. The old St John's site, plus some adjacent council-owned land, could then be used for low-cost housing close to shops and the underground.

But a few months ago the council suddenly announced that St John's couldn't have Harwood after all. It was selling the site to Shepherd's Bush Housing Association for a nominal sum. A planning application to demolish the sunshine school and build new property is now before the council.

Locals are furious that Hammersmith and Fulham has reneged on its promise and intends to build houses for young families close to where many elderly people live. Petitions are winging their way to the town hall, and Fulham MP Matthew Carrington wants the department of the environment to call a public inquiry.

Nor did the council win many friends releasing the new proposals in August when many locals were on holiday. To make matters worse, it even denied that it had ever offered Harwood to St John's until a confidential Labour group briefing — headed "St John's School; background to withdrawal of offer of Harwood School site" — was leaked!

Why has the council changed its mind? It has nothing to do with the fact that the Harwood site is in a marginal Tory ward and new houses with young families tend to mean Labour votes. St John's, however, is in a predominantly Labour area anyway.

COVENTRY

WHERE was Coventry's lord mayor, Coun Don Ewart, when the city needed him during its recent El-Alamein 50th anniversary service?

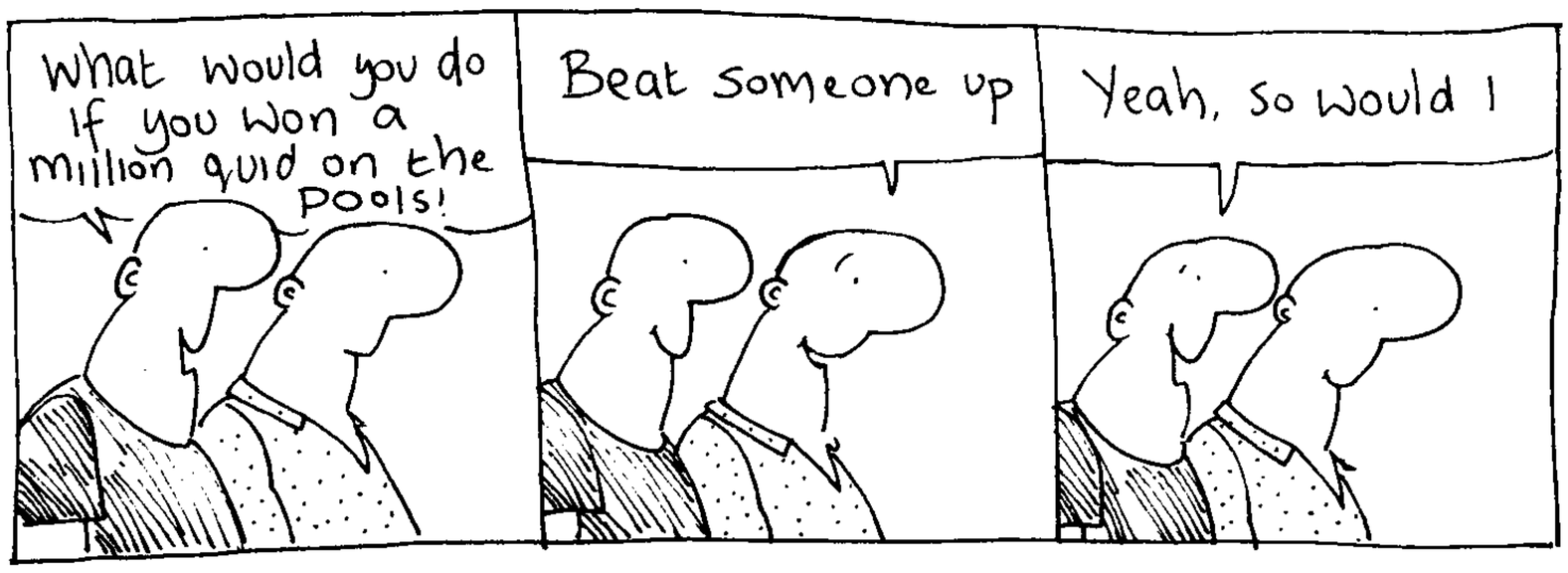
Ewart had agreed many months ago to represent the once great Midlands manufacturing city which had supplied Monty's Supercharge team with 85 fighting men. But while Coventry's old soldiers were sporting their medals in the Radford Road Territorial Army Centre on El-Alamein Day, Cllr Ewart was in sunny Kingston, Jamaica, scene of much fighting over the years but none of it connected with the second world war.

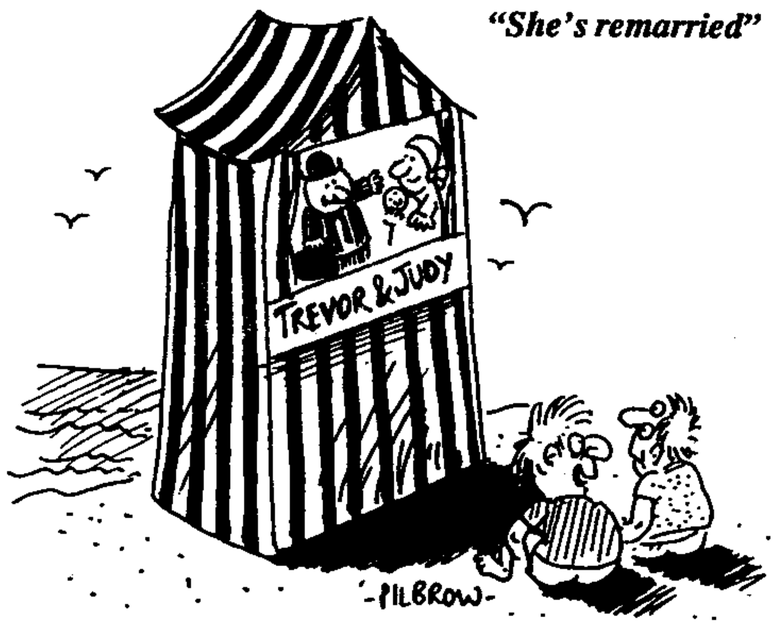
The lucky old mayor wasn't even paying for the pleasure, his costs and flight having been met by the British high commission so that he could take part in the island's 300th anniversary celebrations.

Funnily enough, when news of the mayoral snub was revealed the first citizen was attending a war reconciliation service in the presence of the Queen — in Dresden.

YOBS

HUSBAND





"She's remarried"

Sally Deedes

THOSE who follow the *Eye*'s reporting of research into sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) will have pricked up their ears at last week's news that researchers are flummoxed by the high incidence of SIDS among service babies.

In 1988 the figures stood at 5.8 service baby deaths per thousand as opposed to 2.3 deaths per thousand in the civilian population. Since in service families couples are married and the civilian cot death figures include children of unmarried mothers whose death rate is higher, the true comparison is an even more worrying 5.8 deaths against 1.55.

For several years this column has been writing about the findings of Mr Barry Richardson of Penarth Research International in Guernsey, who has warned that the arsenic preservative OBPA used as a fire retardant in cot mattresses could, when combined with a child's perspiration, produce the toxic gases phosphene, arsenic and stybene. He recommended that each new baby be provided with a new mattress or with one covered by a firmly fixed piece of polythene. Parents reacted so well to these findings that sales of new mattresses increased by 20 percent and the death rate dropped by 16 percent in the next three months.

However convincing the findings, the government seemed determined to ignore them. The committee set up to investigate the deaths found there was no case for the banning of fire retardant chemicals in cot mattresses. Mr Richardson dismisses the committee as a waste of time and money since it carried out no blood tests. He carried out tests on babies who had died on mattresses apparently generating stybene and found that the antimony content in the blood was two to five times the normal maximum normal level.

He points out that the high rate of deaths in service families is due to the development of the infection in re-used service cot mattresses (issued from army stores when married quarters are allocated). His suggestion seems all the more convincing when one realises that service mattresses are treated with the OBPA preservative containing arsenic to make them suitable for tropical climates.

AN EXTRAORDINARY questionnaire has reached me, issued by the Post Office and called *Subpostmaster Questionnaire Quality Improvement Process.* ***Readers might like to ponder its implications when next queuing up at the post office.***

It asks, on a scale of one to five, how good senior managers are at handing out praise; whether the praise should come from an area manager or a district manager; and whether it should be given verbally or in a handwritten note.

The subpostmasters are also asked whether they should receive more praise than criticism or more criticism than praise; or no praise and just criticism. Was the praise, when it was given, sincerely meant, always timely or did it make them feel a tiny bit special? Among other daft questions was the perfectly batty one: should praise be given for "fraud prevention"?

The questionnaire even asks whether subpostmasters would like to receive a special occasion card from senior managers on their birthdays. Why not the senior manager's wife's recipe for chocolate cake, as well?

Letters

Private Eye

Body double

Sir,

I just thought you might be interested in a little snatch (oops! What a wag!) of information concerning Madonna and her seedy little publication. The narrator of the "book", as she has been only too eager to point out, is called Dita Parlo. But I must in turn point your attention to a string of 1920s movies (the most famous of which was L'ATALANTE*) in which a beautiful woman called Dita Paulo featured rather heavily.*

If one inspects the TV interview that Madonna bestowed upon Terry Wogan about a year ago, one is struck by the uncanny similarity between the "look" Madonna was sporting and Dita Paulo's (funny black bob, large eyelashes etc.)

How ironic that millions of Madonna fans lovingly attempt to emulate her look when Madonna herself is nothing but a feeble impersonator of the trends started by others.

I hope that in a small way this short letter begins to bring home just what a personality, talent and artistic sensibility deficit she has.

Yours intelligently,
WALTER HILTS,

Northampton.

Window pain

Sir,

*"Pace" Piloti, some of us welcome the coming emasculation of English Heritage as long overdue (*EYE *806). Planning law makes it difficult enough for the ordinary citizen to influence his physical surroundings, without an additional layer of upper-class Sir Gawains presuming to tell him he must not install UPVC double-glazed windows in his Victorian villa when maintenance, economy and energy conservation (rightly promoted by the local borough) suggest that he should.*

Aesthetically challenged by received opinions and taste, these people see the houses of others as mere backdrops for their own "architecturally correct" lifestyle. That the 20th century may actually have produced building components more efficient and convenient than those of past years never occurs to them. If the "ancien regime's" illogical and undeserved hegemony over our built environment looks like being weakened in future, that is a development wholly to be welcomed and a belated victory for the common man.

Yours faithfully,
JEFF CURTIS,

London SE1.

Lookalike

Whicker

Sanders

Sir,

I wonder if any of your readers have noticed the remarkable resemblance between the sleazy holiday maestro, Alan Whicker, and the greasy, chicken mass slaughterer, Colonel Sanders? Are they, by any chance, related? I think we should be told.

Yours,
FRANK COX.

All Betts off

Sir,

With reference to your two excellent articles dealing with the antics of the Sheffield city council, under its leader Clive Betts, and the financial fiasco of the World Student Games, I would like to point out that the district auditor could not accept that councillors were not warned of the risks involved.

Naturally Clive Betts, having left the sinking ship to become a Labour MP with a huge majority which will ensure a job and financial security for life, claims that he is in no way to blame for the financial mess of the games. Indeed in a recent LOOK NORTH *TV programme he spent 10 minutes "whitewashing" himself. Perhaps a more worthy man would have had the decency to offer a word of apology to the unfortunate citizens of Sheffield who are left to pick up the bill.*

He recently stated that his national hero is Nelson Mandela, who in an interview with Bob Geldof claimed he was a supporter of the IRA.

Yours faithfully,
A. MONTGOMERY,

Mosboro, Sheffield.

Lookalike

Bush

Benn

Sir,

I wonder if any of your readers have noticed the remarkable resemblance between Barbara Bush and Tony Benn. Are they by any chance related?

Your faithfully,
LOUIS ROSIER,

Sunbury-on-Thames, Middx.

MEAL ticket

Sir,

I write with reference to your article on the SUNDAY EXPRESS *(*EYE *806).*

Full of inaccuracies! — save that it is correct that Eve Pollard has boosted the circulation by 100,000. No mean feat, especially when most newspapers are struggling in a contracting market.

Would that it were true that we had £15m to spend on TV promotion for the paper! May I refer you to the MEAL figures, the official analysis of spending comparisons in advertising, you will see that the SUNDAY EXPRESS*'s TV budget isn't even a third of this. The editor's appearances on* GOOD MORNING*, agreed with the management, make all the more sense therefore.*

For legal reasons we cannot comment on individual staff members.

As for our Newspaper of the Year Award, just for information, one cannot enter for this coveted Media Week Award. A panel of judges makes its own selection.

Will we make the Colour Magazine of the Year? Well, it is nice to be one of the three nominations.

Yours faithfully,
ANDREW CAMERON,

Managing Director, Express Newspapers plc, London SE1.

Pipe dream

Sir,

John Elfed Jones's criticism of inaccuracies in your last article on Welsh Water is inaccurate and misleading itself. He conveniently ignores the first article on his Taffia empire which pointed out that Welsh Water has no legal responsibility for lead in tap water.

However, I read recently that the ASA criticised an advert from the Water Services Association, of which Welsh Water is a member, for claiming that privatised tap water is the cleanest in Europe, according to figures that ignore the lead content in tap water! Which way does he want it?

When he claims that they offer grants for taking out domestic lead pipes, he fails to mention that, as the first article pointed out, the take-up rate is low because Welsh Water itself has little idea where the problem is.

As for his claim that Welsh Water voluntarily reduced price increases this year, he ignores the fact that it continues to shoot up above the rate of inflation.

In the first article, I read that Welsh Water has increased prices by more than 100 percent in the last five years and, in the article he criticises, OFWAT predicted that bills will go up by another 50 percent by the end of the decade.

May I suggest he takes up a subscription to PRIVATE EYE, *instead of the occasional purchase?*

Yours sincerely,
JIM GRIFFITHS,

Pontlottyn, Mid-Glamorgan.

Brought to book

Sir,

I wonder if anyone else has realised that the currently predicted overspend alone on the now, and largely, unwanted, new British Library would have paid for a splendid new £1 million public library for every single library authority in the United Kingdom and still have left over £100 million for an extension to the British Museum Reading Room with a new underground storage area (which was what everyone wanted in the first place).

I suppose it is too much to hope that anyone in the Property Services Agency will do the decent thing à la London Ambulance chief. Incidentally, once again it proves just how silly it is when the librarians are left out of the decision-making and monitoring process.

Best wishes,
ROYSTON FUTTER,

National Treasurer, the Library Campaign, London EC1.

Dock lands

Sir,

With your justifiable pride for breaking news before the rest of the nation's papers, I imagine that you found it embarrassing when Old Muckspreader managed to find a story nearly a year old, and then mess it up.

Where has he been if he can only reveal now that the new CAP reforms will increase the policy's expenditure (EYE *806*), *held hostage in Brussels? Obviously, in his haste to catch up, he missed the fact that prices of agricultural commodities will be decreased, cereals by 30 percent, reducing the cost to the consumer.*

As Muckspreader's main aim seems to be: reduce food prices, cut farm subsidies, and maintain/improve the rural environment, could you ask him how he plans to do it (does he feel that fields of thistles and docks, and deserted farms are more desirable?)

Yours sincerely,
FRANK BOWLEY,

Wye, Kent.

GEORGE BUSH
Funeral Home

I-SPY

Norwich

Submitted by Kevin Harrington. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

España in the works

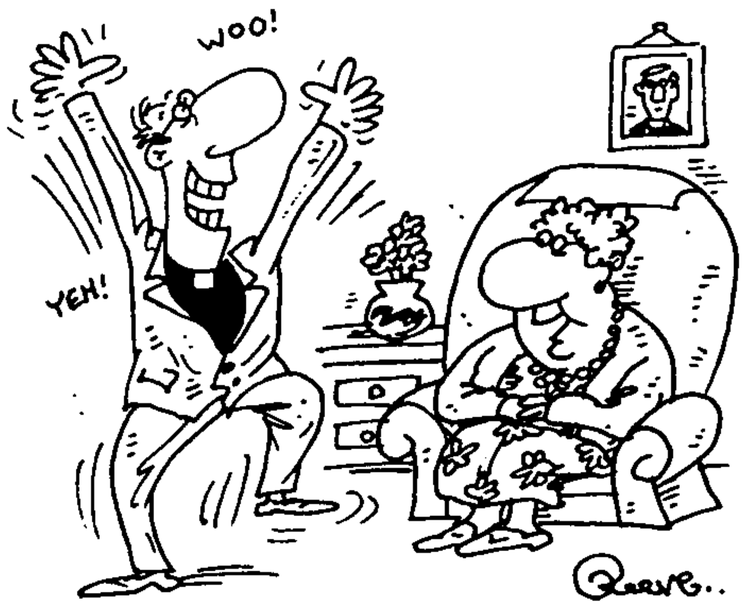
Sir,

Have you noticed the ads in ELDORADO? *They are disguised as shop signs so the camera has to get down low to film them. So far I've seen one for Texas Homecare and one for Olympus Sports. (Can I have £10 each please?)*

Have you noticed the introduction of pay TV on the BBC? Its "direct" channel is scrambled and even though I've paid my TV licence, I can't watch BBC programmes until I pay again. Hence the Beeb getting so friendly with Rupert Murdoch. Next step BSkyBBC. If the Beeb can broadcast all TV (and radio) from one satellite, it won't need all those expensive transmitters and engineers.

Regards,
JON POWER,

Selhurst, Surrey.



"More 'E', Vicar?"

An electric fan

Sir,

PowerGen's up-front chief executive Ed Wallis is no fan of nuclear power — witness his frequent attacks on Nuclear Electric and The Levy.

But hold on a minute. Isn't this the same Mr E. Wallis who waxed equally eloquent in support of nuclear power, and issued dire warnings on the cost of alternatives, when he was manager of Oldbury nuclear power station? And will he change his tune again in future, with equal conviction, when PowerGen orders its first cheap pressurised water reactor?

We should be told...

Best wishes,
DOUG McROBERTS,

Media Relations Manager, Nuclear Electric.

Identity card

Sir,

Please note that the P.J. Wellings from London SE3 whose sycophantic letter praising Garry Bushell was published in your 6 November issue, is not the P.J. Wellings from London SE3 who finds said overpaid journalist a crashing bore.

Yours,
PHIL WELLINGS,

London SE3.

Slur Piers Morgan

Sir,

After ten references to me as "gormless" you now describe me as "talented" (EYE *806*).

I am shocked and appalled by this disgraceful slur.

Yours gormlessly,
PIERS MORGAN,

The Sun, London E1.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"He was chased nearly ten yards through the six-yard box."
ANDY GRAY, Sky
(Jennifer Stanley)

"There is always a choice of whether one does it last week, this week, or next week."
JOHN MAJOR, BBC
(Greg Campbell)

"So, is Frank [Bruno] a contender with a capital 'c', a small 'c' or no 'c' at all?"
JOHN INVERDALE, Radio 5
(Bernard Hughes)

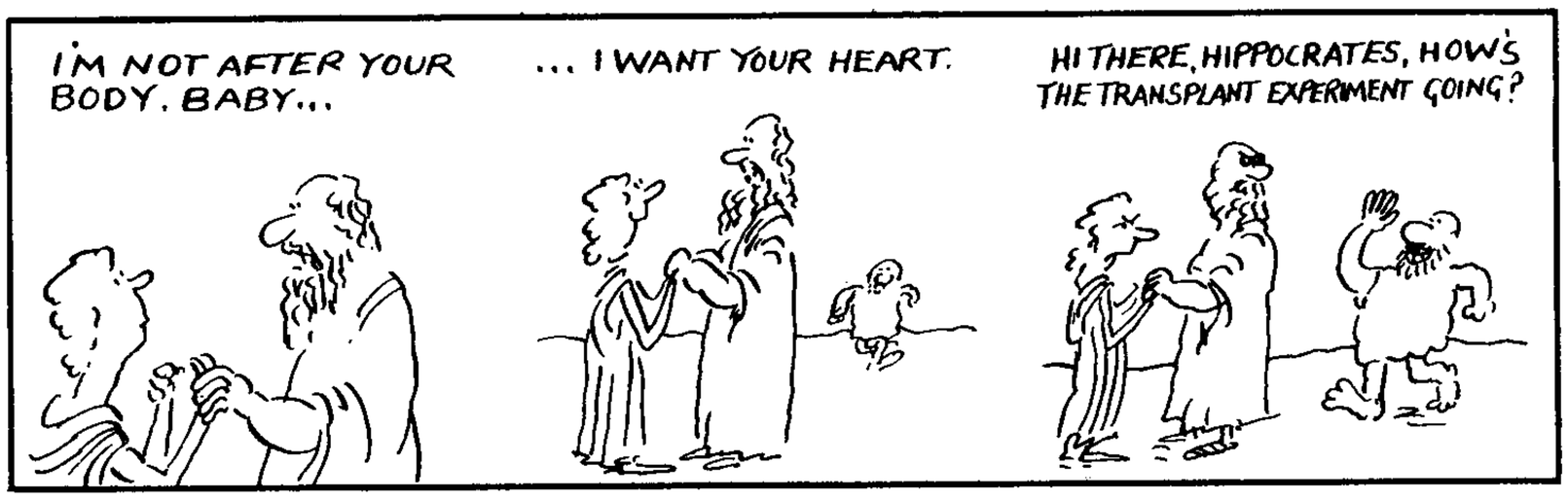
Jim Rosenthal: *So what's an American doing playing in goal for Millwall?*
American goalie: *I'm trying to keep the ball out.*
ITV
(Edwin Rose)

"Boxing's all about getting the job done as quickly as possible — whether it takes 10 or 15 or 20 rounds."
FRANK BRUNO, Radio 4
(Michael Spriggs)

COLEMANBALLS 6 ***on sale now. £2.99***

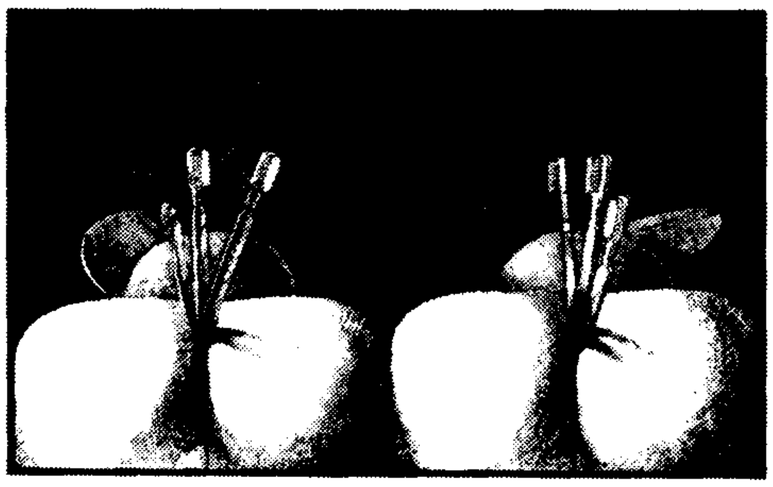
HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN



TRUE STORIES

CHRISTOPHER LOGUE



Illuminated by Bert Kitchen

"IT WAS what you might call a bad year," said Mrs Wendy Etti. "Our dream trip Florida villa was burgled and all our holiday things stolen except the camera. When the film was developed the prints showed the burglars mooning at the camera with our toothbrushes, also unstolen, stuck into their bottoms."

ADDRESSING a group of Arab bankers, Mr David Pidcock, a convert to Islam and the Director of the Islamic Party of Great Britain, said that if they were true to their faith they should give up banking or have one of their hands amputated. "This was", he remarked when interviewed, "not a popular idea."

SPEAKING at the inquest occasioned by the death of his mother, Mrs Trinity Plough, Mr Forsyth Plough admitted that she, an undertaker like himself, had died of a heart attack after throwing a Molotov cocktail at a hearse belonging to Mr Don Burstow, a rival. "He has destroyed our trade and my mother could stand it no more," Mr Plough said. "We have been burying the people of Toowoombalooba for close on a hundred years. He has bribed the local hospital mortuary staff. He pays spotters' fees. And last week he buried a respectable schoolteacher while wearing T-shirt, shorts and sneakers, and listening to God knows what on his headset."

MR CLIFFORD Black, a spokesman for Amtrak, said: "It is true that Mr Benjamin Barad, who is 94, was spewed with waste when the pressurised toilet on the Florida North to Florida South 12-hour express malfunctioned and, as there is no running water on the train, had to sit alone in the Luxury Viewing Cabin until we arrived, it being company policy not to stop a train unless there is an emergency. However, as a one-off gesture, Amtrak has agreed to pay Mr Barad's dry-cleaning bill and to apologise to him, especially as our enquiries have revealed that Mr Barad is a retired teacher who specialised in hygiene for 45 years."

INTERVIEWED in his employer's office, Mr Span Bympe, a Las Vegan truckdriver, said: "I drive for Vegas Chips. These guys held me up and threatened to shoot me unless I opened up the truck. But when they found it contained potato and no casino chips, they began to shoot at each other and I drove off."

AN emergency meeting of the Horning Parish Council heard their Chairman, Mr Paul Martin, say: "We have received a petition whose signatories propose to pass a vote of No Confidence in us, but neither it, nor they, say why, or what, in particular the problem is. I have asked around but nobody knows anything about it. However, I have discovered that, of the three signatories, two are not on the electoral roll and the other belongs to a holidaymaker who has now left the district. I propose to enter the petition into the minutes but not do anything else until next year's Annual Meeting." Passed.

INFORMATION: Bedfordshire on Sunday 18.10.92; Jewish Chronicle 9.10.92; Brisbane Courier 27.9.92; New York Times 20.9.92; Los Angeles Times 30.10.92; Norwich Evening News 1.9.92.
MONITORS: Charlotte Clarke, Stephen Mosco, Norman Reynolds, Liesl Schillinger, Colin H. Barrow, Jeff Bevan.

IPFRONTERS

Continuing the hugely popular Sunday Supplement feature you can read exclusively in every paper...

✪ Is this a blind date?! **Paul McCartney**'s putting TV's **Paula Yates** in the shades!! Is he her Big Breakfast or just a Big Macca?!? Looks like he could use some Wings to escape?!!

✪ **Slattery** will get you nowhere?! That's what TV's **Tony** is telling blonde editor Eve Pollard!?! It doesn't matter how you *Express* it or even if you put it in the *Radio Times*?! Whose lines are they on your face anyway, Eve?!

✪ Is **Melvyn** Bragging about his latest novel?! **Linda Evangelista** is clearly a model listener!! What a way to start the week with the South Bank superstar!! Are they cat-walking out together?!

✪ TV's **Joanna** is looking Purdy happy!?! And TV's **Tony** is looking at those Lumley legs!! He'd better watch his P's & Q's or she'll be back with avengeance!? **Slattery** will get you nowhere! *(You've done this one. Ed.)*

✪ **Alan Sugar**'s found a new dish!! And the West End's **Tara Fitzgerald** is sweet on him too!?! No need for a Computer Date — Alan's winning his Spurs anyway!?! Are they playing Our Song?! Could be a close shave for him!?!

✪ Talk about **Street-Porter** credibility?!? **Janet**'s getting into deep **Walters** with TV's **Julie**!?! They may not be in the bloom of Yoof but when Janet speaks she sounds like she could use educating along with Rita!? *(This is pathetic. You're fired. Ed.)*

(That's enough pisspoor captions to dreary PR photos by clapped-out hacks — Ed.)

MATRIX-CHURCHILL — THREE FOUND NOT GUILTY

by our Cover-Up Staff **Lord Justice Scott-Free**

Lucky not to be in prison

THREE Cabinet Ministers accused of attempting to pervert the course of justice were today acquitted by themselves following a two-second hearing in front of the Prime Minister.

The three men, pictured above, were charged with blatantly trying to suppress evidence, thereby bringing about the conviction of three innocent businessmen.

At the first and last minute, Mr Kenneth Clark, Mr Malcolm Rifkind and Mr Michael Tarzan were told that they had no case to answer.

"If we went down," said Mr Clark, "where would it all stop? Everyone was doing it. Garel-Jones, John Major, Mrs Thatcher. All of us. It was Government Policy at the time."

The men celebrated with champagne before being driven off to tell some more lies on television.

How They Are Related

Prince Charles

Lady Camilla Parker-Bowles

The Emperor Carbunculus
|
Egbert the Green
|
Bonnie Prince Loony
|
George III
|
Barbara Windsor
|
Charles Aznawife
|
Charles de Gaulle Airport

Nell Gwynne
|
Lily Langtry
|
Lavinia Parker-Knoll
|
Davinia Grassy-Knoll
|
Laetitia Parker-Pen
|
Peter Bowles
|
Lady Camilla Dempster

NEW!

Yes! It's The Reverend Barbie!

At last! After 2,000 years you can have hours of fun dressing up Barbie in her glamorous new frocks.

Including:
- **Ordination**
- **Eucharist**
- **Investiture**
- **Coffee Morning**

She walks, she talks, she quotes Bishop Spong!

Perfect for Christmas, Easter, Weddings and Funerals.

The C-of-E-Barbie-Vicar-Set™ comes complete with dog-collar and message of support from Virginia Bottomley.

Pit her against the Rt Rev Ken, the Anglo-Catholic ArchDeacon! Ken comes with red face and young "friend".

Who will win? Who cares?

Price: The collapse of the Church of England.

NEW WORDS

with Philip Howard

SHERRIN
n. Very old theatrical anecdote, probably made up. Example: "Oh no, not that old sherrin again, please."

MORTON
vb. int. To make up stories, usually about the Royal Family, and pass them off as true. Example: "He's mortoning at the moment, to pay off his mortgage."

HOLDEN
vb. int. Obsolete form of above.

RODDICK
vb. trans. To collect leaves, grass, bark etc and market them as being in some way beneficial to health. Example: "You didn't pay £10 for that, did you? You've been roddicked."

RUMPOLE
n. Someone who should have retired years ago but continues for financial reasons. Example: "I see Rumpole's back."

MANSELL
n. Type of moustache worn by boring, whingeing man (see also "Gooch"). Example: "If you grow a mansell I'll divorce you."

The Daily Hellograph

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 1992

No Government cock-up shock

By Our Political Staff
Two Grey Men On Phone

POLITICAL observers were stunned yesterday by the news that twenty-four hours had elapsed without any new crisis emerging to embarrass Mr Major's government.

For months MPs have become accustomed to the fact that every day will bring some new instance of incompetence, stupidity or corruption involving senior ministers.

But yesterday, for an unprecedented period of a whole day, not one new monumental cock-up came to light.

Sources close to the prime minister were last night quick to defend the government's failure to shoot itself in the foot by pointing out that the so-called Day of Inaction was only a "temporary blip", due to the fact that yesterday was a Sunday.

Major Twit

"Sunday is traditionally a day when ministers are in the country talking to Jonathan Dimbleby," the spokesman explained, "which means they are not at their desks in Whitehall thinking up some new cock-up.

"But by tomorrow," he pledged, "things will be back to normal and we shall soon be reading about some further gigantic blunder or other, just as good as the miners, Mellor, Maastricht, the ERM, Iraqgate, the public spending round, the ambulances, the hospital closures, the Yugoslav Peace Conference, the Citizen's Charter, leaves on the line, the omission of David Gower, etc etc."

The Picture That Says It All

By Our Man In Korea R. Seoul

THIS IS the picture that says it all. The faces are glum, despondent, miserable. It couldn't be clearer. Their eyes are full of loathing and they are unable to disguise the bitterness, anger and sadness that they feel.

Yes, the tabloid journalists were utterly desolate yesterday when the Royal couple appeared happy and relaxed on an official visit to Korea.

The journalists' anguished expressions told the full story. They were desperately unhappy at this unhelpful display of contentment by the Prince and Princess of Wales.

"Why do they think they are here?" asked a grim-faced James Twittaker. "The Royals are meant to give us easy stories about their marriage breaking up, not wander about smiling. It's a disgrace."

The other Royalwatchers were equally distraught.

"It could be the end", said one, "of my career. They are destroying the relationship between myself and my editor. It's a tragedy."

Andrew Morton is £34 million richer.

BBC chief not to go

By Our Media Staff
Jane Thynne-Stuff

No one was surprised yesterday when the BBC Chairman Sir Marmalade Gussett, 85, said that he planned to stay on until the year 2050.

"I think 185 is a good age to retire. And there's so much left for me to do. Parts of the organisation are still working."

Sir Marmalade then paid tribute to the departing Director-General, Sir Michael Checkout, who is to be fired in December instead of February as originally planned.

"Many people regard Mr Checkstub as totally useless, but I am not one of them. He has made a very significant contribution to the BBC by agreeing to be sacked early."

Mr John Birt is 23.

Book written about drunk man

By Our News Staff
Lunchtime O'Toole

A book has been published in London about a drunk man who lives in Soho.

The book tells the story of a man who gets drunk every day of his life.

Yesterday a number of fellow drunks gathered in a Soho pub to mark the launch of the book about the man who is drunk.

When asked about the book, the drunk man replied: "F* off. Can't you see I'm drunk?"**

Jeff Bernard is 60.

Full story and pictures pages 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

On Other Pages

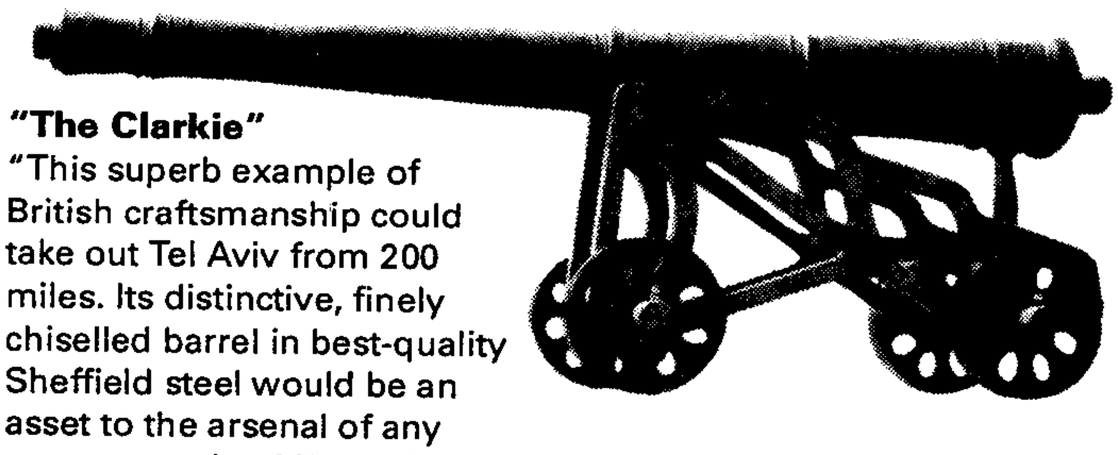
■ MP Hurts Arm in Hunting Accident and other fascinating exclusives — See Peterbore Diary, edited by Quentin Lettsbungthisin p 17 ■ Why the Government Should Resign — Again. Anonymous Leader by Max Hastings p 2 ■ Unfunny Cartoon by Gatt p 5 ■ Even More Unfunny Cartoon by Garland p 16

ADVERTISEMENT

Clark & Co

Suppliers of Superguns to H.M. Saddam Hussein

Export Licences No Problem



"The Clarkie"
"This superb example of British craftsmanship could take out Tel Aviv from 200 miles. Its distinctive, finely chiselled barrel in best-quality Sheffield steel would be an asset to the arsenal of any war-mongering Middle Eastern dictator," writes the late G. Bull.

Fax: covered up by M. Heseltine. Cables: Actualite.

Offices London, Saltwood, Baghdad

The Secret DIARY OF JOHN MAJOR aged 47¾

Wednesday

My vote of confidence last night was a triumph! Even the Liberals realised that I was the best person to be prime minister and voted for me. I can now go forward to put off any decision on Maastricht for at *least* another year, until the Danes have told us what to do. Who says that the British parliament is not master of its own destiny? Just as I am my own man, oh yes indeed!

When I got home to Number Ten, my wife Norman was waiting up with a celebratory cup of decaffeinated Ovaltine. Scarcely had I raised the cup to my lips, than the door burst open and in came Mr Hurd, with a very red face and a not inconsiderably toffee-nosed expression on it. "You have made me look an idiot!" he shouted. "I gave my solemn assurance to my European

colleagues that we would get Maastricht ratified by Christmas."

"Calm down, Douglas," I told him in my special statesmanlike voice, "I had to tell the backbenchers something. It was the first thing that came into my head."

"But what do I tell Mr Lewd Rubbers when he rings up in the morning?" Mr Hurd asked.

"Tell him you're in a meeting," I said. Honestly, you have to do all the thinking when you're prime minister, even for people who have been to Eton.

Thursday

This morning I remembered that we had invited poor Mr Yeltsin from Russia to come on a state visit. At the Cabinet meeting several people complained about the number of functions that had been arranged in honour of our guest. I explained that Mr Yeltsin was facing a grave crisis of confidence, with his economy collapsing, millions unemployed and the threat of a coup by disaffected right-wingers. Everyone looked at me and laughed, which shows how well our spirits are holding up.

Friday

I rang Mr Bush to wish him good luck in the election, but unfortunately I was too late because of the time-lag. When I got through to the Oval Office, a Mr Clinton answered, who is apparently now the President. "Who the hell are you?" he asked, which is exactly what Mr Bush used to say to me. This is a good sign, as it shows our special relationship is still as firm as ever! When I explained who I was, he asked me whether we had met at Oxford. "No," I said, "I support Chelsea, or at least I used to when Mr Mellow was my friend." He did not seem to understand this and put down the telephone.

Saturday

I am not inconsiderably in no small measure annoyed with Monsieur Mitterand, who is in charge of France. He has gone on the television and been extremely rude about my new policy on Maastricht, which is to do nothing for as long as possible in the hopes that everyone will forget about it. What is worse he was rude about me in French, obviously thinking I would not understand what he was saying. He underestimated his man, ah oui! I have immediately written him a very firm letter, with the help of the French phrase book which Norman and I used on our holiday in Brittany in 1973. This is what I wrote:

Cher Monsieur Mitterand,

Quel age as-tu? Où est la gare? Ma femme est malade.

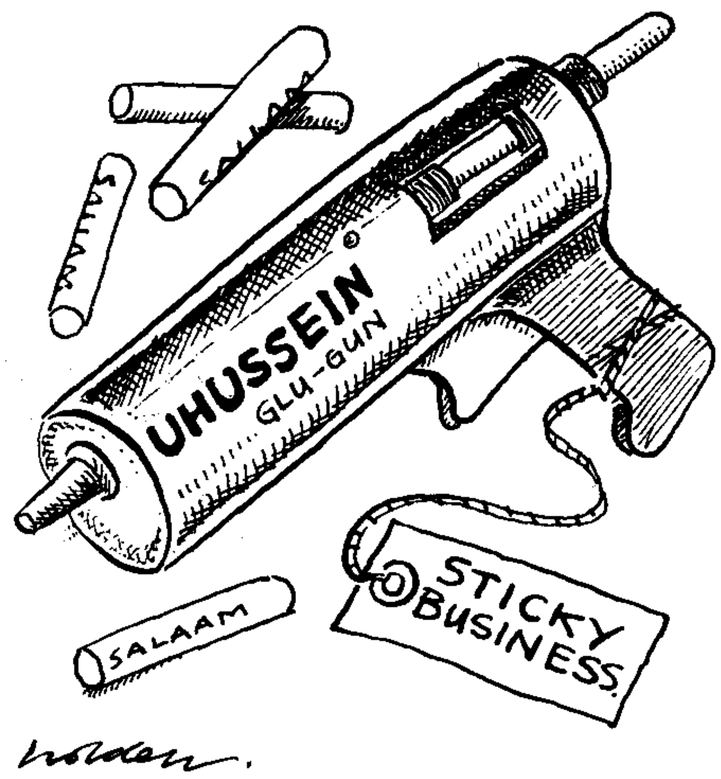
Au revoir pour maintenant.

Jean Majeur
(age quarante-sept et trois quarts)
Grand President de l'Europe

That should show him who is the strong man of the new Europe!

Sunday

Yet another quite ridiculous story has appeared in the papers trying to blacken the government.



Apparently some businessman sold a huge tube of Superglue to Saddam Hussein just before the Gulf War, disguised as an ordinary nuclear weapon. How absurd can you get? I would never have allowed a weapon like glue to be sold to our enemies.

I shall settle this matter once and for all by having a full enquiry into the full story. I will tell them that it certainly wasn't my fault, because I distinctly remember not being at the Cabinet meeting where we decided to sell them the glue (although Mr Waldegrave was, I am almost certain).

Monday

Norma Lamont came in waving a piece of paper on which was written "The leaves are falling off the trees." "What is this, Norma?" I asked, being in no small measure puzzled.

"It is my autumn statement, John," he said. "A lot of work has gone into it."

Later he came back handcuffed to Mr Portfolio, who said: "Don't worry, Prime Minister. Norma's feeling better and I've given him something to read out."

Norma then rehearsed his lines. "Go for growth... reduced interest rates... capital projects... Jubilee Line... cheap cars... boost confidence."

"Very good," I said. "And how do we pay for this?" I asked.

"We put up taxes," said Mr Portfolio.

"What a brilliant idea," I said. If only Labour had thought of that they might have won the election.

Tuesday

I have looked in my diary to see what I was doing when I was supposed to have been told about this Iraqi arms business.

Guess what! The page has been torn out. How unfortunate! Now I will never know the truth.

Don't miss **THE JOHN MAJOR DIARIES** *book, now No. 3 in the bestseller list!*

DOROTHY'S FRIENDS

A GROUP of Cambridge graduates who were in the Footlights together meet up to make a film about a group of Cambridge graduates who were in the Footlights together who meet up to make (Get on with it — Ed)

Stephen is a wry, spry Cambridge graduate who lives in a big country house reading P.G. Wodehouse books. He is joined by Hugh, another Cambridge graduate from the Footlights who lives in a slightly smaller house because he's done fewer TV adverts. Meanwhile Tony, a Cambridge Footlights graduate who now hosts TV shows, arrives with Cambridge Footlights graduate turned screenwriter Martin who has been less successful than the others and ended up with an American wife, Rita.

The fun starts when their old Cambridge Footlights friend Emma brings along her new husband Ken, a successful actor and director who decides to make a film about a group of Cambridge Footlights (That's enough Cambridge — Ed)

POETRY CORNER

Lines on the defeat of President George Bush

So. Farewell
Then
George Bush,
Former President
Of the
United States.

"Read my
Lips."

That was
Your catchphrase.

"Deep doo-doo."

That was
Another.

No wonder
You lost.

E.J. Thribb (17½)

LIZ
BY "CUTTER" PERKINS AND RGJ
I'VE SENT THE BITCH A MESSAGE OF SUPPORT
BUT WOR CHAZZA'S GORRA NEW DOG NOW!
TO DI
7
MEET WOR CAMILLA.
GRR! I'M MAN'S BEST FRIEND!
NOT ANUTHA DOG THAT TALKS BACK!
SNIFF!
CHEER UP YA BIG GOB A SHITE!
YOURS FATHA
XX
DIET PILLS
AT LEAST THIS UN DIVVENT BITE THE HAND THAT FEEDS IT!
DIE, BITCH!
DI, BITCH!
THROTTLE!
GAWRSH! WHAT'S ALL THIS ABOUT PARKER-BOWLES?
THE DAILY TEXAN
CHAZZA/ PARKER-BOWLES SCANDAL Y'ALL MA'AM
YEZ CAN PARK YER BALLS ROOND HERE ANYTIME! FNARR! FNARR!
SIGH! I WISH THEY'D LERRUS DIVORCE WOR BAIRNS, PET.
DAILY WAIL
KIDS TO DIVORCE PARENTS

30 Years of Eye Verse! E.J. Thribb, Rhyming Slang and much more in **POETRY CORNER**, on sale now. £4.99

1st Reading of the Don't Mention Maastricht Paving Motion

11.37 p.m.

Sir Bufton Tufton (Lymeswold, Con): Despite the arguments of my honourable friends I still feel obliged to vote according to my conscience and...

Dave Nasty (Chief Whip, Blackmail East, Con): Don't give me that crap, you little shit! Go through the Ayes door, matey, or you're dogmeat.

Sir Bufton Tufton: Aargh - could the Honourable Member for Blackmail remove his knee from my groin?

Phillip Nice (Assistant Whip, Butterup, Con): Leave him, Nasty. Cigarette, Sir Bufton? Look, it doesn't have to be like this. The treaty is dead whether you vote for it or not. We'll delay it as long as you like. It's hardly worth your appearing in the

HOUSE OF COMMONS
OFFICIAL REPORT

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

ZZZZZZ

HANSARD

News of the World over, is it?

Sir Bufton Tufton: What on earth does my honourable friend mean?

Dave Nasty: You know what we mean, Buffy. That French tart you're knocking off in Shepherd's Market. Think of your kiddies...

Phillip Nice: Mmmm... My honourable friend does have a point, Sir Bufton. Why not just be a good chap and reconsider?

Sir Bufton: Boo hoo hoo hoo...

Nasty: Hurry up, Fatso, I'm running out of patience...

Nice: For God's sake, Dave, put the gun away.

Betty Boo (The Speaker): Order! Order! Never in my career have I seen such disgraceful behaviour.

Nasty: Shut up, you slag. This is nothing. Just wait until the public spending cuts!

HOW THEY VOTED

Noes 316

Aye'll do whatever you says 319

WOMEN PRIESTS TO JOIN EC

Major question-mark over Carey's leadership

by Our Ecclesiastical Staff **Synod O'Connor**

BY THE narrowest of margins, the House of Synods today voted in favour of the Maastricht Ordination (Paving) Bill. The result was widely interpreted as a vote of confidence or not as the case may be in the leadership of Mr John Carey.

No sooner were the votes counted, showing a victory for Carey by a whisker-thin 3 votes, than accusations began to fly of arm-twisting and blackmail by Church Whips to force waverers into line.

EC Ryder

One vicar, who asked to be nameless (Rev Kevin Hairshirtlifter), claimed that the Chairman of his Parochial Church Council had been rung up in the middle of the night by a well-known pro-Maastricht bishop and told that a series of compromising photographs, showing unusual scenes in the organ loft of St Masoch's in 1983, would be offered to Sunday newspapers if the vicar failed to toe the pro-Brussels line.

Another vicar was seen in tears after a session with the Lambeth Palace heavies. He was told that his wife's Christmas Fayre Bring and Buy would be "smashed up" by women deaconesses bussed in from London unless he went into the "aye" lobby.

Matthew, Deutschmark, Luke and John Major

A highlight of the sitting was a low, droning speech by Archbishop Major, who claimed that God had come to him in the night and told him to rejoin the ERM at the rate of 2 marks 25 pfennigs to the pound.

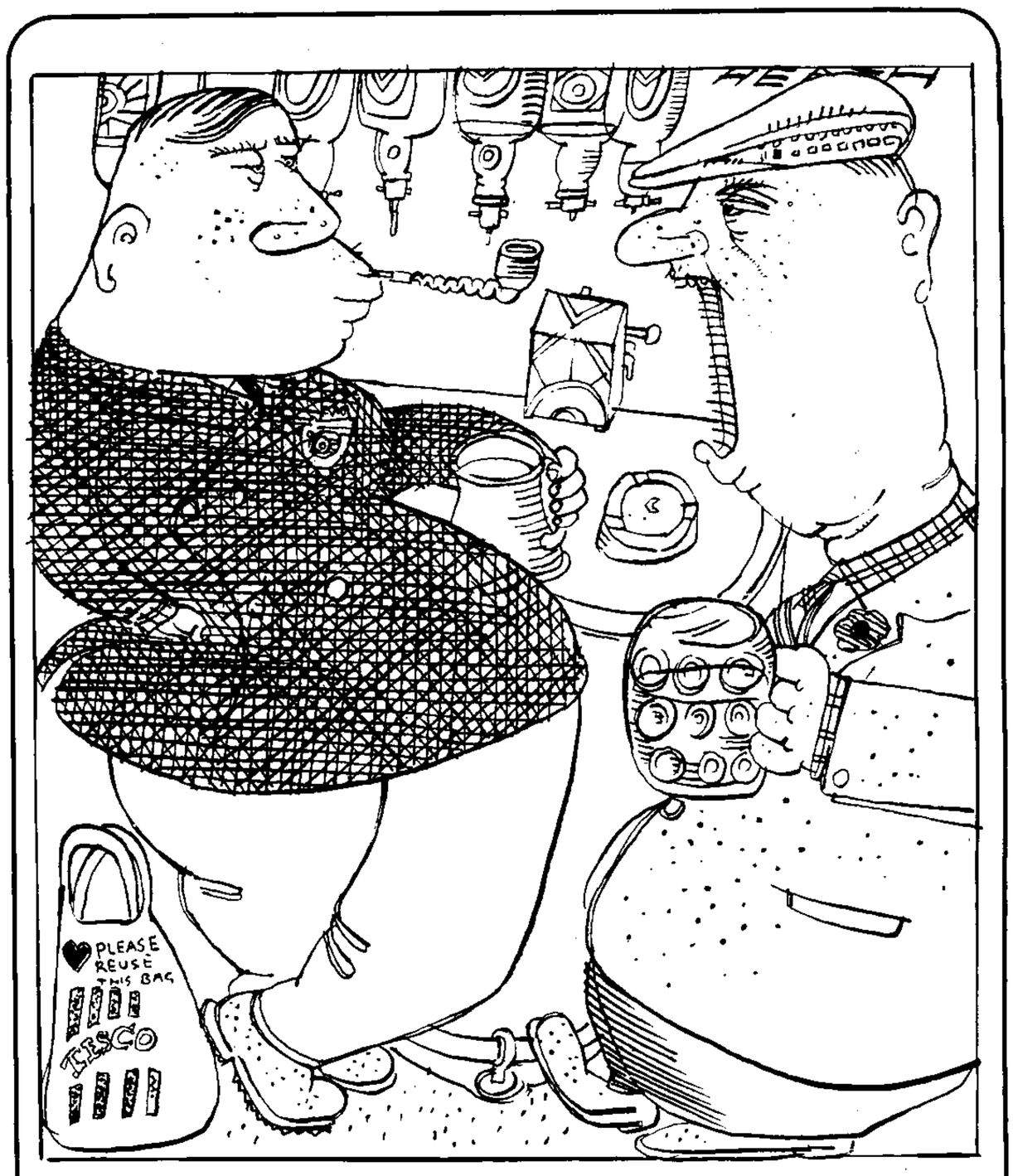
Rev J.C. Flannelette writes:

Yesterday's vote marks a historic turning point in the long march of the Church of England towards final collapse *(shurely 'bright new vista of the 21st Century'? Ed)*.

Those of us who supported ordination can now look forward to an end of argument, and the start of a new era of rancour, schism and hatred.

However it is not a time to gloat. We must all think, in a very real and compassionate way, of those wonderful little men who have stood in the way of progress for so long, and who we have now, thank God, smashed into the ground.

We shall both care and share for them in our prayers of triumph.



Great Bores Of Today.

"...the fish counter is just amazing the choice is phenomenal I got sea bass there on Saturday and you never see that at Sainsbury's though they *do* have fifteen types of tea and the most fantastic fruit juices mango paw-paw and that other one mind you Asda's bread has got to be the best you have to be there early to get it but it's worth it I went to the new one just off the bypass there's free parking cheap petrol facilities for kids and someone who takes your shopping to the car their range of wine is extraordinary I don't know how they do it Australian Chardonnay for £1.99 that would be £6 in the off-licence although you spend a bit more getting there you actually save money I do all the shopping now Catherine puts her feet up on a Saturday she was so pleased last week when I discovered these fantastic toffee biscuits at Gateway they're from Holland and then Tesco's does these fabulous Belgian chocolates you get a chance to go to New York and Waitrose have got these canvas bags which we use for everything I use mine as a briefcase I think they're made in China..."

'I VOS ONLY OBEYING ORDERS'

Von Heselstein's shock plea

by Our War Crimes Staff
Winston Matrix Churchill

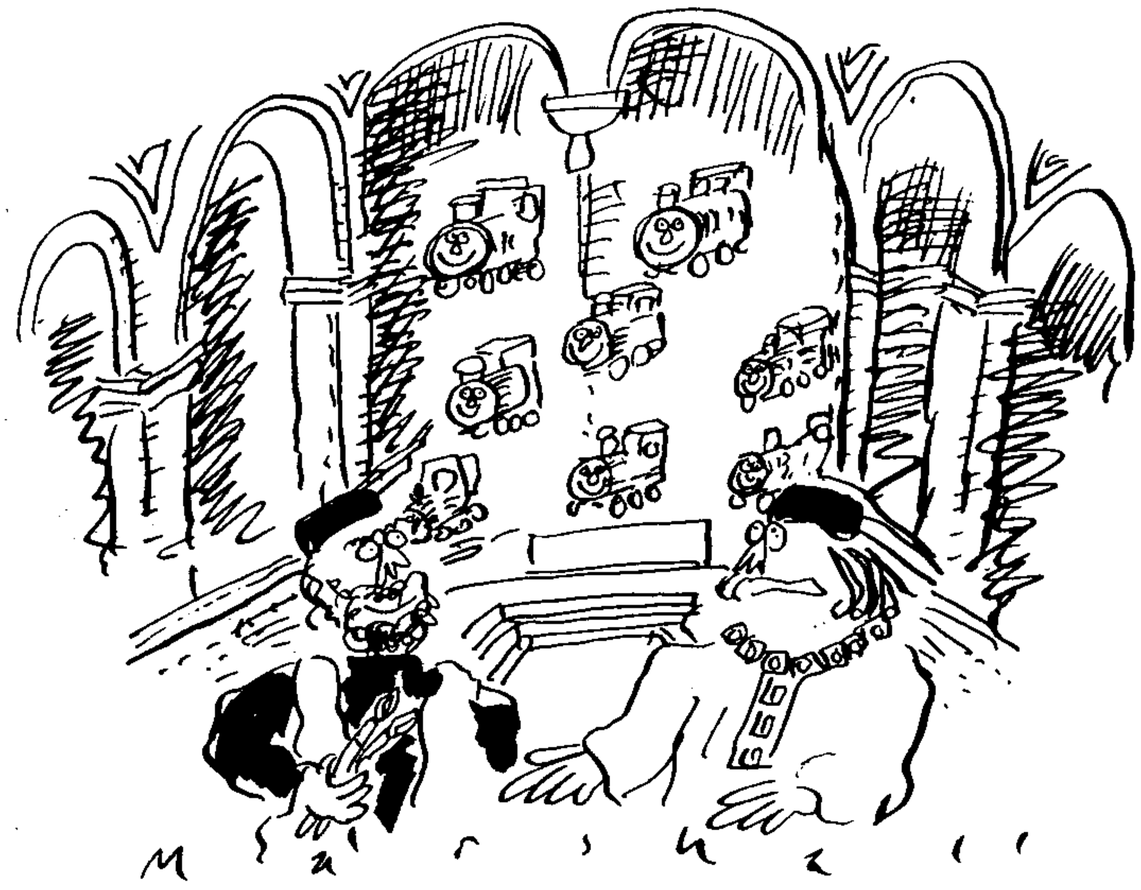
LOOKING haggard and drawn *(badly by Garland)*, **the blond Obergruppentarzanführer (trade minister) von Hezza today claimed that he had only been "following instructions" when he signed an affidavit consigning three innocent men to prison.**

"I was forced to perjure myself, pervert the course of justice and sentence these innocent men to their fate because I was told to by a senior law officer, the Attorney-General," said the trade minister.

The Clark Descending

His testimony was in stark contrast to that of his former colleague Herr Alan Clark, who sat beside him in the dock giggling, rolling his eyes and shouting: "I did it. I did it for mein beloved Führer, Herr Thatchler."

Earlier the court heard how trouble started when four men — von Hezza, Tristan Garrulous-Twytte, Lord Kenneth Clark of Civilization *(no relation)* and Herr Rifkindtropp — had met in secret *(contd p. 94)*



"Michelangelo, are you sure Pope Paul III is going to be happy with this Thomas the Tank Engine motif?"

TO THE EDITOR OF THE DAILY TELEGRAPH

Constitutional Crisis

SIR—May I use your columns to issue a categorical denial of recent reports in the so-called "tabloid" press, linking the name of the heir to the throne, Prince Charles, with my lady wife, Lady Camilla Parker-Gussett? Whilst it may be true that the Prince of Wales met my good lady on the polo field in 1973, and that they then formed a very warm and close personal friendship, which led them to spend the night together on many occasions while I was away on business, I have it on the solemn assurance of Lady Camilla that their friendship never extended at any stage to anything other than a warm mutual interest in water-colour painting and taking secret holidays together in Italy.

I remain, Sir, yours faithfully (unlike my lady wife),

SIR H. GUSSETT
Dunbonkin
Nether Cuckold, Beds.

WANTED FOR RAPE

This man is wanted by the international community for crimes involving rape. He is believed to be French and to answer to the name Jacques Delors. He is armed with a mandate from the French farmers to put their interests above everyone else's. He is extremely dangerous and if provoked is likely to start a global trade war.

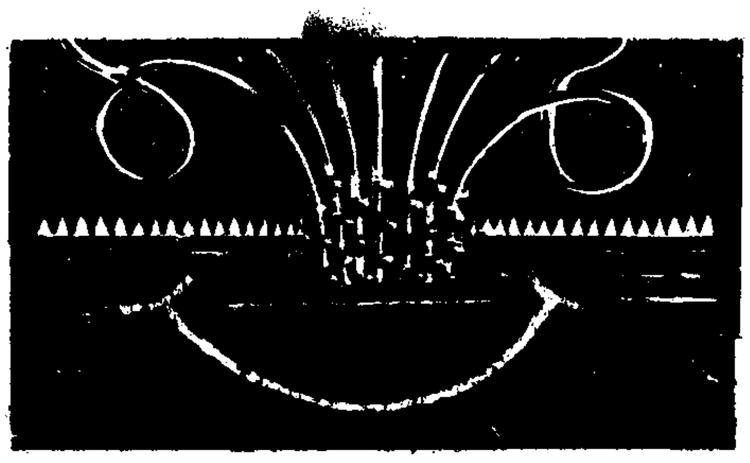
He was last seen leaving the GATT talks with a can of rape-seed oil and told one terrified bystander (J. Selwyn Gummer): "I'm going to screw the whole world and no one can stop me."

Celeb

LIGGER

WAAH WAAH! SOB
WHAT'S ALL THE KERFUFFLE?
IT'S PIXIE FROU FROU, DAD.
COME TO DADDY MY LITTLE ANGEL LET ME MAKE IT BETTER...
WAAH.
THERE THERE... WHAT'S WRONG? TELL DADDY ALL ABOUT IT.
WAAH.
SHE'S TRIPPED, DAD, THAT'S ALL.
SAYS THERE'S A GIANT PINK DINOSAUR CHASING HER.
OH BLIMEY. LOOK I'VE TOLD YOU ABOUT RAIDING THE MEDICINE CABINET.
SNIFF

DIARY



BOB DYLAN

Okay. Let's move. Right. One — two — three. Let's get this show on the road, man. Yeah. Let's fly, get high, oh me, oh my. Like the man said. Yeah.

Like, I'm writing this column today, right? But it's really tomorrow, or it will be when it's not yesterday. *Like the hydrangea hyena I come out to play / Don't give us tomorrow what you can't give us today.* Whooo! One — two — three. Can you get a meaning on that, brother? Of course you can't. I'm an enigma. And enigmas don't have no meaning. *The saucepan in my soul needs your love so bad / In this whole crazy world the good are the bad / The washing-up can wait to be done / But this is my song and it can't wait to be sung / The creeping Isaiah looks over to Babylon / How long did you say before that cab'd be along?*

You see what I mean? Enigma — gma-eni.

Like the writer man says, I'm constantly reinventing myself, like God. One day, I'm Bob Dylan. And the next day, hey I'm still Bob Dylan. But though I'm still Bob Dylan, I'm a different Bob Dylan, like I might be wearing new socks, well, probably not, but in other ways I'll be a bit different, like a day older, a day younger, you get?

Essentially, however much I change, I'm still the same Bob Dylan, the lone guy with the folk guitar who sang of the things that are wrong with this world, of people suffering and huffering and wuffering, hey, you know what, that rhymes. And I still play songs, I still protest as good as new. Like I wrote this yesterday, angry at what has been going on in this place we call a country:

Where oh where can a poor guy go
With his voice and his guitar
To earn a bag of dollars
To buy his thirty-first fast car?

I'll tell you where, Mr Preacherman
In this world of guns and radium
He can clear a million dollars
By playing twenty minutes in a stadium

And what, Oh Lord can he sing about?
Well, it don't matter what
So long as he grunts and croaks a bit
About war, love, peace, the lot.

And who, Mr President, will listen,
As he stands alone looking shifty?
Why, a rag-bag of star-struck hippies
Mostly approaching fifty.

I got myself a brand new band: The Traveling Wilburys by name. Just a group of teenagers like myself who like to get together and jam a bit, sing a few songs, have ourselves a real good time, play ourselves some Scrabble, mix ourselves some hot drinks, take ourselves some early nights and blow-out on food that slips down real easy. Like the man says: Whoo!

Like, we've had to wind our heads round the fact that one our members, Roy Orbison, guy with shades, yeah, that's him, has passed over to the other side and that's a real low, man, 'cos it means we gotta get someone else, like it's conference time.

I say howsabout John Lennon — he's got some gravel in his voice and he's a rebel, like he'd happily walk into Sardi's without a necktie and he'd only darn well put one on if the manager really asked him to. "Dead," they reply. Clean gone outta my head. Lennon dead — whoo! "So what about Jimi Hendrix?" I say. "He's dead." Brian Jones? "Sort of dead." So now we're scraping around. "Bob 'The Bear' Hite?" "Actually, he's dead." "Keith Moon?" "Dead." "Jim Morrison?" "Pretty well dead too."

There's a pause. A real porcupine of a pause. A planet of porcupines dressed in peach, praying to the preacherman. Then I have an idea. "Howsabout a chick — like, a female? Whoo!" I say. "Howsabout Mama Cass?" "She's dead." "Janis Joplin?" "Dead." "Whassername — Nico?" "Dead." Talk about the blues. *Mr Senator Man / Don't tell me I'm dead / When my guitar is unplugged / And I'm just lyin' in bed / These four strong winds / Will keep me alive / To sell the alive album / For £12.95.*

You know what? I was the voice of a generation. With legendary early songs like "Change is Gonna Come", "Like a Dead Cow Blues", "Freedom's A-Gonna Change", "Like A Wailing Frog", "Let's Have a Change from Freedom", "Free Wat Tyler" and my later "A Change is as Good as a Rest" I taught a generation how to think and how to feel. I'm an artist, and I was too sensitive for this life.

Then, when I was standing at the Gateway of that roadside shack called Despair, God put his hand on my shoulder and I looked round at him and I looked into the mirror of my soul. You know how I knew it was God? You know how I knew? He had kinda curly hair, and dark glasses and a beaky kinda nose and he didn't smile much and he sang songs of love and freedom on a folk guitar. And you know what? I've worshipped the guy ever since.

Like, sometimes it's hard being Bob Dylan. Sometimes I feel the world is a kinda globe situated in the middle of the universe, with millions of millions of different people on it. And one of these people is Bob Dylan. That's a heavy burden for any guy to bear. Heavier still for a poet. So I sing of my sufferings, like my negro brothers once sang in their chains:

Oh I'm a poor guy with twenty five houses
And none of them in the right place
Yes, and I'm a beggar in new flared trousers
Curs'd with a world-famous face

And I'm tortured with mass adoration
Yes, and crucified with the nails of wealth
And I suffer from the love of a nation
And I'm curs'd with excellent health

And my chauffeur wants an extra week's holiday
And I'm having to find a new chef
It's a tough life being a legend
Like a slave struggling for his last breath

Some people call me a visionary, others a profit. But I'm just a freewheelin' guy with a guitar and a song to sing and a staff of one hundred and about two hundred close aides and interpreters and three alimonies. Every year for the past twenty five years, I've realised an album of new songs, songs that say that change is gonna come, and so I sing them in stadiums all over the world and sure 'nuff, change comes, in notes and in coins, cheques acceptable only with a valid bankers card, and these songs are all burnin' bright as beauteous baskets of backpacking butterflies in a burple haze, like the great German novelist Rimbaud would have said, if he'd been me. And every song I sing is different, every song represents that time, and that place, from "Gone Long Time" (1966) to "Time Gone Long" (1978) to "Long Time Gone" (1985) to "Long Gone Time" (1988) to my most recent, "Gone Long Time", a remake of my 1966 hit, only this time sung so's you can't hear the words. Like the man said: Oh yeah.

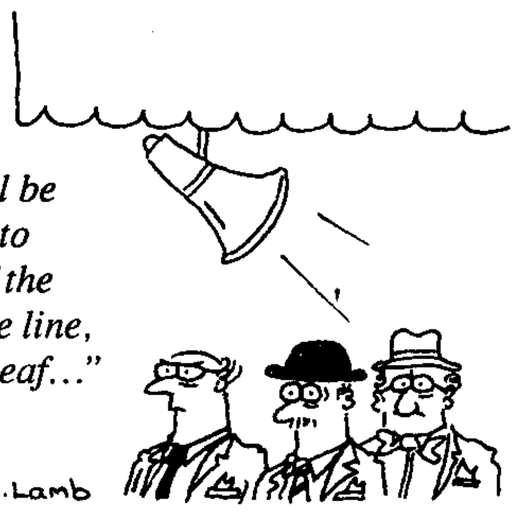
Your best weapon is your honesty

By ALAN CLARK
Former Defence Minister

Mail on Sunday

IT IS exactly like the brochure we studied before coming, or the pages of Health and Efficiency, furtively poured over beneath adolescent bedsheets.

Daily Telegraph



"The train will be delayed due to Chancellor of the Exchequer on the line, claiming to be a leaf..."

REAR COLUMNS, ***Collected Diaries of the Famous. Edited by Craig Brown. Now on sale.***

Literary Review

Rhyming couples

My Secret Planet
Denis Healey
(Michael Joseph, £16.99)

Seven Ages: Poetry for a Lifetime
Ed. David Owen
(Michael Joseph, £14.99)

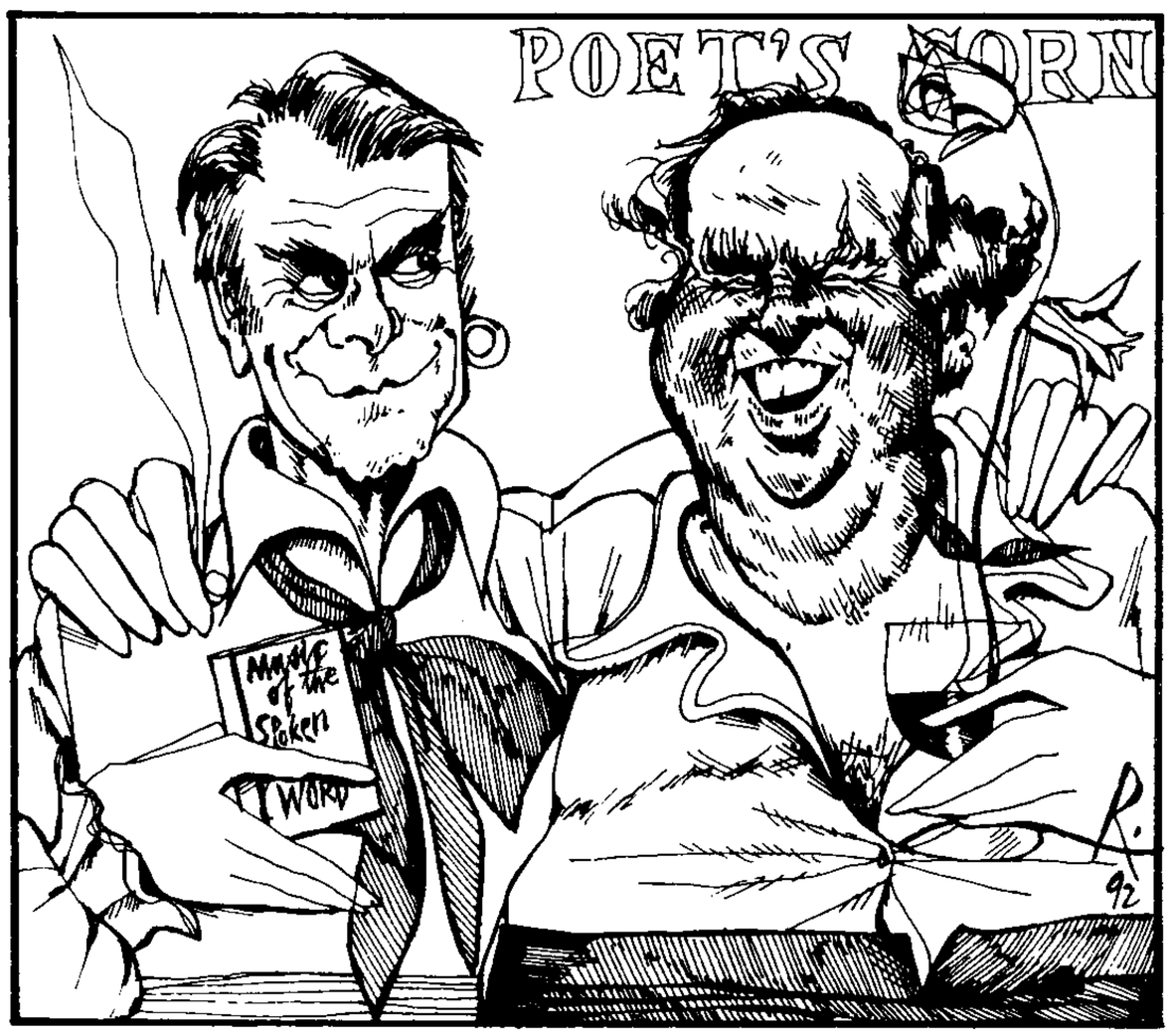
THE AGE of the politician with literary interests is popularly supposed to have ended with the death of Churchill, but all around us tiny green shoots are protruding from what was assumed to be a mouldy and decaying bough.

Kenneth Baker has edited an anthology or two; Roy Hattersley has embarked on a sequence of jumbo-sized novels. Even Lady Thatcher, on the evidence of Philip Larkin's letters, has been known to recall (imperfectly) the odd line of poetry. The simultaneous publication of Denis Healey's saunter around his mental lumber room and David, or as I suppose we had better start calling him, *Lord* Owen's selection of his favourite poems is an alarming extension of this trend.

God knows what Michael Joseph thought it was doing in releasing these two within weeks of each other, though. Two recently ennobled former Labour cabinet ministers; two collections of "writers who have influenced my life" (Owen confines himself to verse, but the cradle-to-grave format remains) — they were bound to get reviewed together. Equally, they were bound to attract comparisons of the most mutually injurious sort.

Lord Owen, unhappily enough, lets himself down in the second sentence of his brief introduction. "I have picked these poems for the music of their language, the memories they evoke or for the way they complement each other, adding to the beauty of the whole." A little later he writes: "Poetry for me is the music of the spoken word." These are exemplary sentiments. To them might be added the thought that the act of writing a poem is to unleash another star into the welcoming firmament.

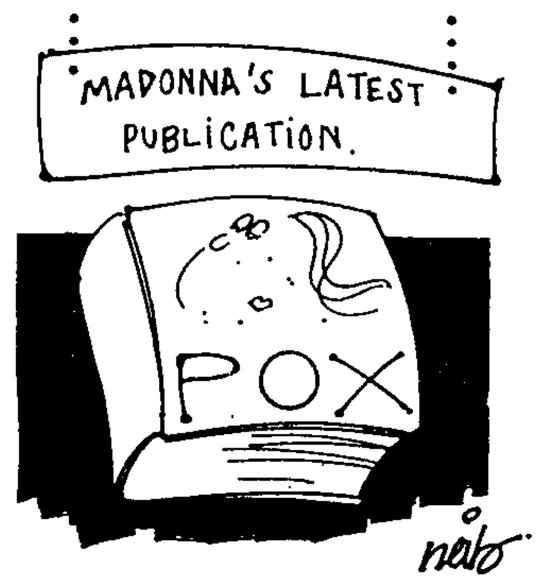
Though Lord Owen's speculations on the form might sound like the worst sort of nursery-room whimsy, it is at least fairly easy to get the measure of his anthology. In fact the word "generic" might have been invented to describe it. A good test is to think of any highly familiar poem you learned at school — MacNeice's *Bagpipe Music*, say, or Wilde's *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* or Larkin's *MCMLXIV* — they're all here. An even better, supplementary test is to ask an aged relative to think of any highly familiar poems he learned at school — Macaulay's *Lays of Ancient Rome*, say, or Coleridge's *Kubla Khan*, or Kipling's *If* — they're all here too.



Set against this predictable company Wendy Cope seems like an outrageously modern ironist.

With Lord Healey, alternatively, we are immediately transported to what Ronald Firbank would call "the heart of a brainy district". The old bruiser's intellectual credentials are, of course, well-established: double first in Lit. Hum., turned down a career as an Oxford don, introduced Iris Murdoch to the novels of Samuel Beckett. Scarcely has the second page of the "Boyhood" chapter of this literary life been reached than Healey is ruminating about Thomas Traherne. Great gouts of Turgenev and Dostoevsky follow in the rear and the general effect is just a tiny bit exhausting.

The infuriating — or invigorating — thing about *My Secret Planet* is that it isn't a pose. The constant intellectual one-upmanship is quite unfeigned. After all, which other retired UK politician could give you his views on Kant without provoking eyebrow-raising incredulity? He and Owen might share a few favourites — Kipling, Hopkins and Dylan Thomas, for example — but the gulf between them gapes. To Lord Owen, you feel, "literature" is a facial expression, something one picks up on appropriate occasions, like a Sunday suit or an old boys' tie; to Lord Healey it is a way of life. But even Lord Owen seems a literary colossus when compared to some of his youthful successors in the House of Commons. In a semi-literate age the idea that poetry is the music of the spoken word can even have a faint nobility about it.



BOOKS & BOOKMEN

■ *THERE IS some alarming news for sweet-natured Harold Pinter: a group of feminists at the University of Southern California, Daughters of Eve, is researching his treatment of his ex-wife Vivien Merchant with a view to bringing him for "trial" next year before a "Daughters' Jury".*

Joining the great playwright in the dock will be Ted Hughes (charged with "fatal damage to Sylvia Plath, 1963") and John Osborne ("fatal damage to Jill Bennett, 1990"). "Witnesses will be called from Britain," the Daughters of Eve warn.

How will the defendants be forced to attend? Will they, perhaps, be kidnapped? The Daughters do not say. But Harold, Ted and John might be well advised to avoid any trips to America for the next year or two. Just in case.

☐ **THE decline and fall of once respected Penguin Books moves on a pace with its useless spelling dictionary.**

The "A" section kicks off reasonably enough on page one where it lists various hard-to-spell words like *aard-vark*. This will come as a revelation to anyone who reads the blurb on the back of the book: "From *aa*, *Aachen* and *aardvaak* to wowser and yoicks... headwords give all the spellings most people will need plus... Common misspellings."

Common misspellings for the word aard-vark, or aardvaak, presumably.

■ IT WOULD not be unreasonable to assume that Sir Kingshley Amish's authorised biography might be published by the Old Devil's own publishers, Hutchinson. Not so.

Richard Cohen, sacked from Hutchinson, has stolen a march on his old firm and signed the book up at his new home, Hodder & Stoughton. The author is old leader writing hack and ex-*Sunday Times* industrial correspondent, Eric Jacobs, Garrick Club crony of Kingers. It is unlikely anything untoward or indeed mouth-watering will be revealed.

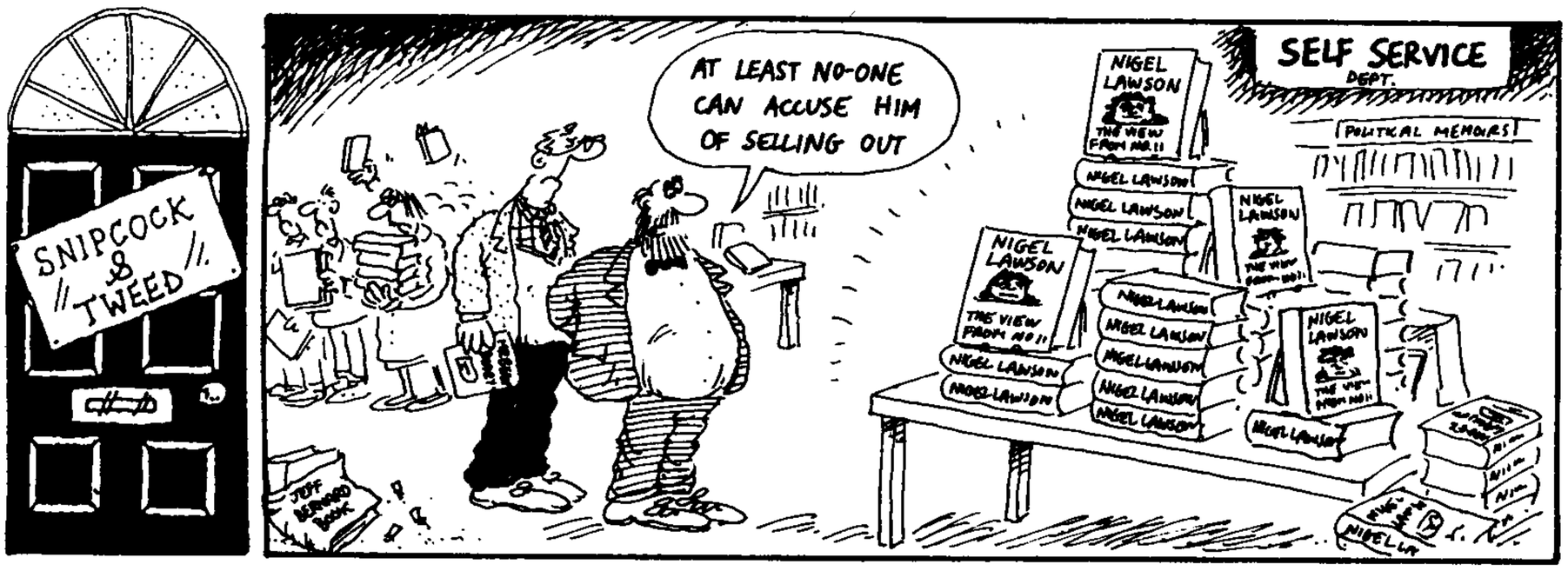
And what garbage publishers talk. The Rev Cohen has also commissioned a biography of the late and grating Kenneth Tynan from an American playwright with the ridiculous name of William Triplett. "Kathleen's is a wonderful book," the vicar oozes to *Publishing News*, "but it is also very personal. This one will show a side of Tynan that's never been seen before." If it is an impersonal side, that is quite true.

Cohen has had a great success with running the Cheltenham Literature Festival this autumn and perhaps this has gone to the ex-Olympics fencer's head.

☐ *THE week's battiest publishing news is that Sir Sincere-Stevenson, in effect a twice bankrupt publisher, has at last been provided with a hereditary publishing peerage. The ancient Old Etonian has been persuaded to publish infinitely fewer books under his eponymous imprint and to become editor-in-chief of trade publishing for Reed Consumer Books.*

This means that Secker & Warburg's peripatetic boss, Dan Franklin, and his sombre chief editor, Robin Robertson, are answerable to Viscount Sincere, as are Helen Fraser of Heinemann and even that Ancient Mariner, grizzled Geoffrey Strachan of Methuen, life president of the Sue Townsend Society.

'Bookworm'



ARMING IRAQ

Eye told you so...

AS FIRST predicted in the *Eye* weeks ago, the case against Matrix Churchill at the Old Bailey has caused acute embarrassment at the very pinnacle of government and throughout the intelligence services.

The fantastic haste with which officials approached Judge Smedley with "public immunity certificates" hoping to ban from the trial any reference to the security services and the defendants' connection with them has also now been belatedly exposed in the rest of the media.

The four ministers concerned signed the documents barely even reading them, their officials very confident that proper confidences would be upheld. Judge Smedley, they had been told, was a "safe" judge who had been chosen to try the case for his long experience as the senior judge in the British sovereign bases in Cyprus, a place run almost entirely by MI6 and its friends in the military. The world now knows the result of that miscalculation.

At first, the certificates worked. Judge Smedley rejected the defence argument that ministerial certificates should not be permitted to suppress evidence of some relevance to a criminal trial.

In order to obtain the documents, the lawyers for Matrix Churchill's Paul Henderson had to reveal his defence — that he had been following Government policy, not announced to Parliament, to sell significant defence-related equipment to Saddam. When Smedley read the documents, he felt he had no alternative but to release them, as the Court of Appeal had held a few months before (in the Judith Ward case) that disclosure of highly relevant documents *had* to be made to defendants.

The policy documents had, of course, been "weeded". Further defence demands for the missing memoranda were rejected. One of them, mentioning Matrix Churchill, which the FCO unaccountably failed to produce, was its briefing to John Major for his bungled attempt to negotiate Barzoft's release in late 1989. The one card which would have saved Barzoft — namely a threat to stop British defence sales to Iraq — was the one card John Major never played.

Judge Smedley also largely upheld the immunity certificate signed by Kenneth Clarke, enabling MI6 to suppress all material they did not wish to disclose. As a result, large amounts of material relating to Henderson's meetings with MI6 were withheld at the trial, contrary to what ministers are now saying.

Although Smedley was quite happy to rule out a lot of material, he didn't see why the court shouldn't know that the security services had led the way in flagrantly breaking the law relating to arms exports to Iraq. The judge thought this might be relevant to the defence of Henderson and Co: namely that they were selling arms to Saddam for their country, and that they knew they were being patriotic because MI6 had told them so.

The documents which were released, and quickly passed on to anyone who was interested, including the Labour party, give some idea of the astonishing scale of the secret arms trade with Saddam which was conducted by British and American intelligence with the help of pretty well every arms company in Europe and North and South America.

Saddam's greed and lust for power seemed as limitless as the greed and lust for power of the arms companies and their advisers in intelligence. The political justification for the arming of Saddam by western intelligence was sensitively summarised by former defence minister Alan Clark when he told the trial it was "in western interests for the Iranians and the Iraqis to fight each other — the longer the better". This was the perfect way to "destabilise the Middle East", the chief aim of the CIA and MI6 since the birth of Arab nationalism.

But the political aims were as nothing compared with the financial gains. The "commissions" paid to individuals from buyers and sellers on every one of these arms contracts brought into their bank accounts the most glorious riches.

These commissions explain the sense of panic that gripped the government after the collapse of the Henderson/Matrix Churchill trial. Two fears predominate: the first that the extent of the commissions paid on Iraqi contracts might become known; the second that inquiries might turn from arms exports to Iraq to closely-related exports to Saudi Arabia.

The mere suggestion that Saudi arms deals might be exposed to the light of day is enough to cause hysteria in the Tory party. For at the end of that line, as the *Eye* has consistently suggested, is the absurd but extraordinarily wealthy figure of Mark Thatcher, son of the baronet and baroness of the same name.

Before the countries fell out over the invasion of Kuwait in the summer of 1990, Saudi Arabia was the most regular conduit of arms to Iraq. The same sort of commissions were paid on those contracts as on the arms the Saudis bought for themselves. An indication of the extent of bribery and corruption in Saudi arms deals comes from a trial in the United States in which Thomas F. Dooley is suing United Technologies Corporation for damages to compensate, he says, for being dismissed after trying to expose the level of bribery involved in Saudi arms deals.

One document which was recently referred to in the trial is a "partial trip report" by an agent of Sikorski, the helicopter subsidiary of United Technologies, to Riyadh in April 1989. Sikorski's man went to the US embassy there and reported back to his company on the state of the Saudi arms industry. Right at the start, his report noted:

"Significant message traffic from UK and Washington DC vis-a-vis the commissions involved in AYII."

AYII is Al-Yamamah 2, the second part of the vast Al-Yamamah arms deal signed for Britain in 1985 by Margaret Thatcher and again in 1987 by Thatcher's defence secretary, George Younger. There then followed the mysterious note:

"Armitage involved. Very concerned. Read message from him."

(If any *Eye* reader knows who this Armitage might be, please feel free to share the information with us.)

The next note is unambiguous:

"Rolls Royce and BAe have moved approximately 4 billion US dollars to Saudi to delay the engine decision. Royal Saudi Air Force and Saudi Arabian Land Forces want GE engine indefinitely."

The "engine decision" related to all the aircraft — not just helicopters — in the Al Yamamah deal. The Saudis originally plumped for General Electric engines — from the United States. But the British firms had "moved" four billion dollars to delay this decision. The delay, incidentally, was partially successful. Many Rolls Royce engines went into the Al Yamamah plans — at a reported "commission" (bribe) of a million dollars each. Indeed, the Tornado aircraft which were sold by the British government to the Saudi government were bought by the ministry of defence from British Aerospace at some £25 million each, about double their cost, leaving BAe to distribute to agents, middlemen, sheikhs' families etc, unimaginable quantities of surplus dosh in "commissions".

The next note was the most remarkable of all, and requires no interpretation:

"This four billion dollars was mentioned in connection with M Thatcher's son."

Not surprisingly, the report goes on: "A son of the king is concerned about the credibility fact for the kingdom and the alleged pay-offs. This reference was clearly made to Bandar." (Bandar, in fact, was not the son of the king, but the son of the Saudi defence minister.) Despite this concern, the contract continued, with the pay-offs hardly curtailed.

No wonder that the intelligence spooks and their friends in big business and Whitehall were so angry about what Alan Clark called the "intrusiveness" of Sir Geoffrey Howe's embargo on arms to Iran and Iraq in 1985. Increasingly from 1986 onwards Iraq became the icing on the Saudi cake. If decent hardworking businessmen couldn't enrich themselves arming a dictator in Iraq, might they not also be prevented from arming dictators in Saudi Arabia?

What happens if Lord Justice Scott starts to probe this underworld of bribery and warmongering? What might he uncover? How much might he reveal of what was reported in the National Audit Office account of the Al Yamamah deal, a report which was suddenly suppressed and has never been published?

Lord Justice Scott is of course very much senior to Judge Smedley. But such are the terrible consequences of the Scott inquiry that it seems unlikely that the lord justice will be able to demonstrate the celebrated "independence of the judiciary" with which Smedley actually did push this vast scandal into the public eye.

HISTORICAL NOTE: Westland was at the centre of a furious row in the British cabinet in late 1985 and early 1986, which resulted in the resignation of then defence minister Michael Heseltine. He thought Westland should team up with a European consortium, but Margaret Thatcher favoured a tie-up with Sikorski and its United States parent company, United Technologies. The European consortium would have made it much harder for United Technologies to get a bite of the Al Yamamah cherry which Thatcher had just negotiated. A director of United Technologies at the time was Thatcher's close friend and adviser, Rupert Murdoch.

MINISTERIAL NOTE: The Scott inquiry, it is said, will be able to hear evidence from all ministers, not just the four (Heseltine, Kenneth Clarke, Malcolm Rifkind and Tristan Garel-Jones) who tried to suppress evidence in the Henderson case. One minister who might be anxious to help is currently in charge of flogging arms to the Saudis: the minister for defence procurement. He is Jonathan Aitken, former British arms company director and close friend and adviser to the Saudi royal family.

INTELLIGENCE NOTE: MI6 went to the Old Bailey to testify in public for the first time in its secret life. Belatedly, it demonstrated some intelligence, by changing its story and admitting Matrix Churchill's Paul Henderson's bravery and importance as an MI6 agent. The MI6 witness then overdid it explaining what a murderous megalomaniac MI6 knew Saddam Hussein to be — throughout the whole period that the Government to which MI6 were reporting this fact was helping him to create an armaments industry.

...and Private ICI

ALONG, long time ago — 1987 to be precise — *Private Eye* revealed a series of secret and illegal exports of munitions and propellant powder not only to Iran but also to Iraq, Libya, Argentina and elsewhere.

Companies such as ICI, through its subsidiary Nobels of Scotland, exported tons of explosives to the Gulf along with other European manufacturers and the South Africans. Royal Ordnance, another big shipper, enjoyed considerable profits from this trade in the 1980s.

Although our exposures embarrassed and upset the companies involved, it was not the possibility of a government inquiry into their illegal exports that worried them. (We now know why not: government departments responsible for monitoring the export of munitions and war material actually colluded in the sales.)

At the time all that worried ICI about the *Eye*'s revelations was that the firm might receive a call over our proven allegations that it was part of an illegal price-fixing cartel which dominated the world market in explosives. But the firm received no unwanted visitors or scrutiny — apart from *Private Eye*'s.

NUCLEAR SECURITY

Fallout...

ONLY 70 miles from major towns of southern England, a man said officially to be in need of medical treatment has broken the security system inside one of the biggest concentrations of pressurised water reactors in the world and shut them down illegally.

It happened at Paluel, close to Dieppe, where there are four PWRs with a total capacity of 5,300 megawatts supplying nearly 10 percent of France's electricity.

The man, who has not been named, was a 38-year-old technician who considered that he had been overlooked for promotion and in half an hour shut down three of the four reactors (the fourth was already shut for fuel loading).

It was, said the local paper *Paris Normandie*, a world first in nuclear history. It took 24 hours to restore power.

As the local paper comments: "One can imagine catastrophic scenarios when one sees what one simple technician was able to do on his own."

FOCUS ON BARTS

A premedicated crime?

IF THE government's plan to close St Bartholomew's hospital in Smithfield while reorganising health care in the capital stinks like a leaking catheter, the man appointed as flak-catcher, Sir Bernard Tomlinson, is increasingly emerging as a dupe of senior civil servants and ministers.

His "independent" review of London health provision calls for transfer of the 800-year-old hospital to the Royal London at Whitechapel and Mile End — a remarkably specific recommendation for a report even its author calls "necessarily strategic, rather than detailed".

And why did Virginia Bottomley, the health secretary, appoint Tim Chessells as chairman of a special group to implement Tomlinson's "findings" before consultation on them had even begun or the report's recommendations become government policy, in whole or in part, if the whole exercise did not have a pre-determined agenda?

Take, for example, Tomlinson's views on his old alma mater, University College Hospital. One of its strengths, he claims, when compared with the Middlesex and by inference Barts, is that it is adjacent to the basic science department of University College. Strangely — and despite a specific invitation to do so — he refused to visit the outstanding basic and applied clinical science department within the postgraduate research complex being developed by Barts at Charterhouse Square.

Here a group of international scientists, including a Nobel prizewinner, is funded by industry, the Medical Research Council and the Wellcome Foundation. To cynics his refusal might well indicate a tiny dose of bias.

This site contains the academic department of general practice and primary care, which has well established close links with the deprived local communities served by Barts — the very same local community healthcare Tomlinson purports to promote. The closure of Barts not only destroys the important clinical basis for this work, but also the support Barts has given to develop and improve primary care in deprived inner city areas.

Tomlinson spent no more than *five hours* at Barts and, as far as is known, no time at Barts' "partner" hospital, the Homerton. Over the past 10 years Barts has integrated its services with the Homerton to improve care to the communities served by both hospitals. This pathfinding work was totally ignored by Tomlinson, even though it enshrines the principles of transferring resources to the district general hospitals and community on which his recommendations are supposedly based.

While superficially purporting to improve the delivery of primary care, Tomlinsion actually proposes actions that clearly destroy such work. His refusal to spend enough time at Barts to view the Charterhouse Square operation — or the £65 million worth of capital spending on the hospital itself — implies that a decision had already been made and that his visit was just for appearances.

For a variety of reasons there is an historic enmity between Barts and the North East Thames regional health authority (NETRHA), which sees Barts as unhealthily elitist. The chairman of NETRHA was, until recently, the same Tim Chessells who is now chairman of the implementation group that will oversee the fate of Barts.

During a whole day discussion of the Tomlinson report at NETRHA about six weeks ago, proposals for the closure of Barts were included for the first time. NETRHA staff confirmed the sudden inclusion rather jubilantly at a party at the same time.

Before this about-face, Tomlinson had stated at a number of private dinners that his report would *not* be that specific and that he did not want to be responsible for recommending the closure of specific hospitals, a sentiment echoed in the contradictory introduction to his report.

But there is wide-ranging evidence of a pre-determined campaign against Barts.

The old City and Hackney health authority, whose health purchasers supported Barts, was merged with unsympathetic purchasers from the old London district and Newham health authorities. One purchasing entity has been created with a general manager responsible for purchasing decisions over the whole area, and the appointed manager is not from City and Hackney, the Barts catchment area, which could pose a threat to the hospital's financial viability.

Even more instructive are the overseas contacts established by NETRHA's previous chief executive Terry Hunt and an organisation called NHS Overseas. It is understood that Saudi Arabian purchasers are waiting in the wings to buy the Barts Smithfield site with the possible intention of turning it into a private hospital to provide consultants and other medical staff on secondment to Saudi Arabia. It is believed the Saudis have a contract for the provision of staff with Guy's but are anxious to recruit more British doctors.

Tim Chessells, the "man at the centre", had a number of private meetings with the previous health secretary and Tomlinson initiator William Waldegrave, and is understood to be close to him and his successor, Bottomley. In a TV interview before publication of the report, Mr Chessells remarked that the pace of change would be fast once it was made public.

It was also widely felt that the appointment to Barts from St Mary's of Professor Anthony Pinching and his team — one of the most respected AIDS teams in the world — upset both NETRHA and the health department. The last thing they wanted was another high profile team going to Barts when the hospital was under serious threat. Barts' cardiac directorate, meanwhile, is one of only two still in profit. Despite this, the number of coronary artery bypass grafts and cardiac catherizations per month has been halved and the angiography lists have been cut by two-thirds, even though there is a six-month waiting list. The bed occupancy on the coronary care unit is always 100 percent and the unit pioneers work on heart rhythms.

Tomlinson was trained at UCH and presumably his old loyalties remain. The original plan was that UCH would close and the Middlesex remain open. Suddenly a remarkable switch was proposed and UCH is to remain while the Middlesex "sacrifices itself'. UCH will become more visible if Barts closes, and it is thought that in the event of the Barts site being sold, the money will not be used for primary care or community health but developing the UCH/Middlesex operation.

Interestingly, Barts attracts more clinical research money per academic than any other medical school in the country except Oxford. In 1989 Barts attracted £130,000 per academic compared with £87,200 for University College and £74,800 for the London Hospital.

Rumours abound that Barts managers have accepted the Tomlinson axe without even putting up a fight. Chief executive Dr Ken Grant jumped ship shortly before the report, although Peter Gibson, his loyal press and public relations manager, issued a statement stressing that the decision had nothing to do with Tomlinson: "Dr Grant wishes to develop his career in tropical medicine abroad." Gibson's first idea on taking up his appointment was to suggest hiring a press agency to feed the media knocking stories about Barts to soften the blow of its closure by his political masters.

PS: Professor Tomlinson, 73, a pathologist who hasn't practised clinical medicine for many years, is said to be an authority on dementia. Theoretically, at least, he should have been in an excellent position to treat the government's non-strategy for inner London's hospitals.

COAL v. GAS

One Sizewell B fits all

FOR John Baker, chief executive of National Power, an appearance before the Commons select committee on trade and industry last week was a pushover.

All he had to do was edit the speech he made at the Sizewell B inquiry 10 years ago on behalf of his old employer, the Central Electricity Generating Board, and replace the word "nuclear" with the word "gas".

Then he said the CEGB needed another nuclear power station because they were such a cheap way to make electricity. "The board's main objective," he explained, "is to minimise costs. As part of the task of meeting this objective the board believes that it is necessary to take advantage of nuclear power... It makes good sense to build Sizewell B so as to reap the earliest possible economic benefits."

As we all now know, nuclear power isn't cheap. But now gas is getting the same soft soap treatment.

Baker gave a masterly performance in front of the committee, as smooth as warm margarine as he offered sympathy to the miners, saying how much he wanted to burn British coal. He suggested that thousands of jobs could be saved if only the RECs (regional electricity companies) would use only electricity produced by burning coal for their supply to the nation's 20 million domestic customers, who would have to pay a supplement, of course.

This would be added to the bills sent out by the RECs, on top of the 11 percent subsidy consumers already pay to keep "cheap" nuclear power afloat. The indignation of the customers would be directed at the RECs and Baker, as head of a generating company, could quite truthfully say it was not his fault if electricity was so expensive.

Baker produced figures to show that his own combined cycle gas turbines (CCGTs) produced electricity cheaper than coal. The trick here is to compare new CCGTs with *new* coal-fired power stations. True, new coal stations would cost more; but no one in Britain is proposing to build a new coal station. Indeed National Power is closing 5,000 megawatts of coal-fired capacity.

The real comparison should therefore be with *existing* coal stations, mostly built decades ago and with their capital paid off. Here the figures, as Arthur Scargill showed, favour coal. And the gas stations offer a prospect of cheaper electricity *only* until the cost of gas rises. Baker himself argued that CCGTs, other than his own, which had had to complete contracts for gas after a 35 percent rise slapped on by British Gas, would be uneconomic.

He even turned the knife in the RECs by saying that they had become partners in the new CCGTs and could be tempted to pass on the extra costs from their own power stations to the customers, "whether the schemes are economic or not". He said nothing about any temptation facing his own company to use its own CCGTs in order to force down the price of coal (and, as it happened, shut down the mining industry).

National Power wants to build two more CCGTs, at Didcot and Stathorn, each with a capacity of 1,300 megawatts. They are awaiting permission from Michael Heseltine. If he wants to ease the situation, he could make a start by refusing permission.

Also giving evidence to the committee was Professor Stephen Littlechild, director general of OFFER, the Office of Electricity Generation. He has been chosen by government as a scapegoat, which is unfair because he is to be sacked for doing his duty. An innocent in politics, he told the select committee the facts: that it was not his role to be a super-dictator of energy policy and what he had to do under the electricity act was to operate strict market rules: cheap is beautiful. There is a rough justice of sorts, because Littlechild played a big role in devising the tortuous rules governing electricity privatisation which have created the problems now facing the industry.

Insiders believe the main culprits are two people who are now keeping their heads down: John (now Lord) Wakeham, who was energy secretary during privatisation and was called in by John Major to advise on the mass shutdown of pits. And Tim Eggar, alleged current energy minister who should have realised the mess the government was walking into.

Meanwhile two small but vital words have played little part in discussions so far: exchange rate. Overshadowing *all* calculations about cheap foreign coal and electricity is the fact that devaluation of sterling by 15 percent will greatly *increase* the cost of imports as soon as new contracts are negotiated. And — this is the really sensitive bit — when sterling is devalued still further, we will not be able to *afford* foreign power.

In the City

WHILE the hunt for allegedly corrupt Bank of England officials has been abandoned by the serious fraud office (SFO), it would appear to have a continuing interest in certain Price Waterhouse employees who were involved in auditing the Bank of Credit & Commerce.

It is understood that former BCCI officials have been quizzed by the SFO about the hospitality extended by bank officials to those involved in the audits. The SFO would appear to have been particularly interested in allegations of partying by PW employees at BCCI's expense.

For reasons which are no doubt misinformed, it seems the SFO has the view that certain PW people might have been provided not only with good food and wine but also good (or perhaps not so good) women. Certainly BCCI was big on hospitality — it had a whole department which did nothing else but *look after VIPs*. And, according to some former BCCI executives, that department's representatives were often on hand at the end of a hard day's audit work to provide R&R for tired accountants.

The SFO theory would seem to be that such generosity — based on the old eastern principle of "find out what a man wants and bury him in it" — could help explain the strange blindness PW seems to have had for so many years to what was really going down at the Bank of Cocaine and Conmen International. PW, of course, entirely rejects any such suggestions.

ELSEWHERE in the world of blind accountants it seems there has been a shake-up inside Coopers & Lybrand among those bean counters who failed to spot what Cap'n Rob and friends were doing with the *Mirror*'s beans.

One of the senior figures involved in the Maxwell audit work has been moved to personnel affairs, while another has retired early on health grounds.

Perhaps these moves herald an opening of the Coopers' cheque book for a substantial donation to the voluntary City compensation fund for Maxwell pensioners. So far Coopers is not believed to have made a contribution, despite its role in not detecting the pensions robbery and the millions the firm earned from Maxwell, who was reckoned to have been the accountants' biggest UK client.

ASIL NADIR'S arrest earlier this month — he was released on police bail after questioning — indicates the opening of a second front by the SFO while awaiting his trial next year on the Polly Peck fraud charges. The recent arrest involves allegations of the disposal of assets to the detriment of his creditors. Inquiries continue.

IT SEEMS that certain very important documents relating to some of the high profile clients of Landhurst Leasing have mysteriously disappeared from its files. Among these are said to be such valuable items as personal guarantees.

Two files that were undoubtedly complete, however, are those referring to one-time Amber Day chairman Philip Green and Tottenham Hotspur chief executive Terry Venables.

Other aspects of the Landhurst scandal, including its involvement in the Wealdstone FC property deal, are now the focus of the investigation by the City Fraud Squad.

Their interest in Wealdstone relates not just to the involvement of loan shark Tony Schneider but that of his partners or associates in a £1 million investment which involved a short-term loan and possibly participation in one of the parcels of property close to the football club site bundled up and sold to Tesco for approaching £20 million.

In with Schneider were Tommy Hayes, longtime associate of Soho porn property boss Bernie Silver; John Sheridan, a pub and snooker club owner from north London linked in Soho property deals to the once £1 million bankrupt Hayes; and Paul Berman, a name not unknown to shareholders in International Media Communications.

IMC was a video distributor injected into shell company Entertainment Production Services in August 1988 in return for shares valued at 19p each. Berman was a substantial shareholder but not a director in IMC (Video), the three-year-old company bought for £8.3 million in that deal. He was allotted 4.8 million shares.

Alas IMC failed to make its warranted 1988/89 profits of £750,000 and within 12 months the vendors were subject to a claim for compensation. The sad truth about IMC was not discovered, however, before Berman had sold almost 2 million shares for some £350,000, despite an agreement that no shares were to be sold before mid-1990. The sales were well-timed. By the end of 1989 the price had fallen from 16p, the level at which Berman unloaded, to 5p.

It seems meetings between Berman, his friend Schneider, Hayes and Sheridan, took place at the IMC offices off Park Lane, possibly regarding the Wealdstone deal whereby it appears they were able to take out their £1 million plus interest helped by a subsequent £3 million-plus investment by Schneider's benefactor Ted Ball at Landhurst which is still looking for its money.

EVENTS in what was Eastern Europe are attracting some unlikely predators and partners. Word in property circles is that Godfrey Bradman, late of the debt-laden Rosehaugh, has been sighted in Berlin looking at deals in association with that veteran survivor of at least two previous property crashes, Ronnie Lyon.

TRAPS are once again being set for the unwary on the Vancouver stock exchange (VSE). This time the bait is Dia Met Minerals which has caused great excitement with its potential diamond find in Canada's Northwest Territories. The "find" has sparked the biggest land rush ever seen in North America.

Following the Dia Met discovery last year, the classic VSE scam swung into action, suddenly providing a series of Dia Met clones — stocks with acreage somewhere near the Dia Met find. Such stocks have since been hyped as the next diamond play. VSE history shows what usually happens next: the mugs are sucked in, the promoters sell out and all at once there is no diamond mine.

Given the VSE's scandal-ridden history and the multi-millions lost by British investors there already, it is more than surprising to find a London broker, Credit Lyonnais Laing, tipping any Vancouver-quoted supposed diamond play. Yet last month CLL's Tim Hoare and Roger Chaplin were excitedly writing up Lytton Minerals as a "cheap albeit speculative play" on the back of the possible sparkling prospects of its acreage in Lac de Gras, 70 kilometres from where Dia Met has a possible diamond mine.

Lytton shares were then 30 cents, up from 10 cents in April. Within 10 days they had hit 60 cents. The rise was prompted not by the CLL report, but by Lytton disclosing that an assay of bulk samples from its Lac de Gras site had found "substantial amounts" of minerals often associated with the presence of diamonds. A second announcement disclosed that further assays had revealed "a profusion" of garnets, also associated with the presence of diamonds.

What may be more relevant than the Lytton acreage or the assay results is who owns the brand new laboratory which carried out the tests. That turns out to be one John Dupuis, jailed for four years in 1979 for conspiring to import cocaine. Despite that handicap, Dupuis became a director of a VSE-listed company. Earlier this year he was fined C$5000 for failing to tell shareholders that it had produced poor drilling results on a supposed gold prospect. Then last month a local broker was fined C$12,500 for buying shares for Dupuis in Lytton ahead of a 1990 deal which resulted in his wife becoming a major shareholder. Lytton shares doubled on that deal. Only in Vancouver.

It might be thought that such connections would deter all but the deaf, dumb and blind from Lytton, but then which description Tim Hoare qualifies for is open to debate. He is not unknown in Vancouver having formerly helped to promote Breakwater Resources, which was far from a winner. CLL clients should also know that Lytton is also being promoted by the usual Vancouver spivs who are always in and out first.

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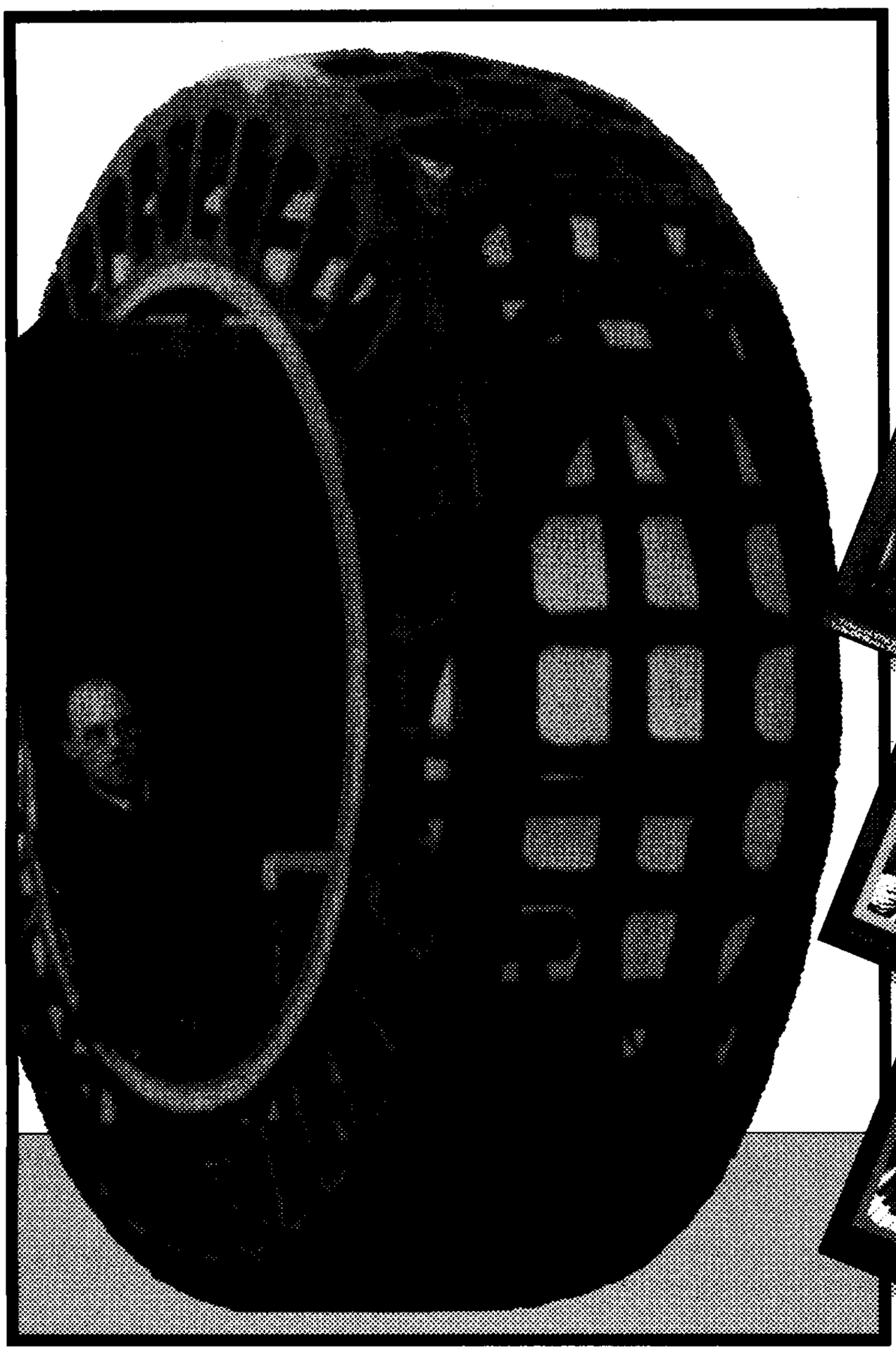

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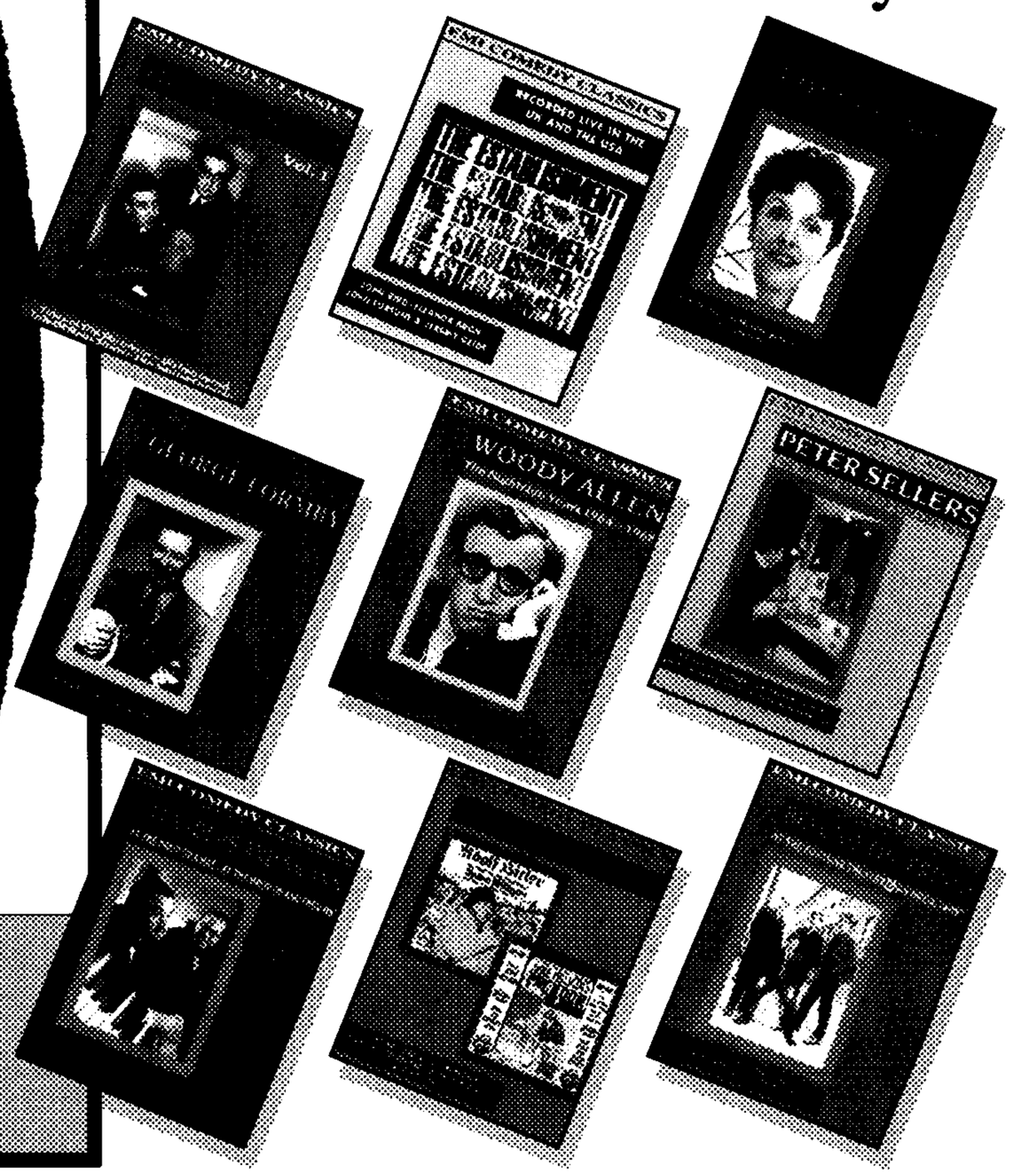

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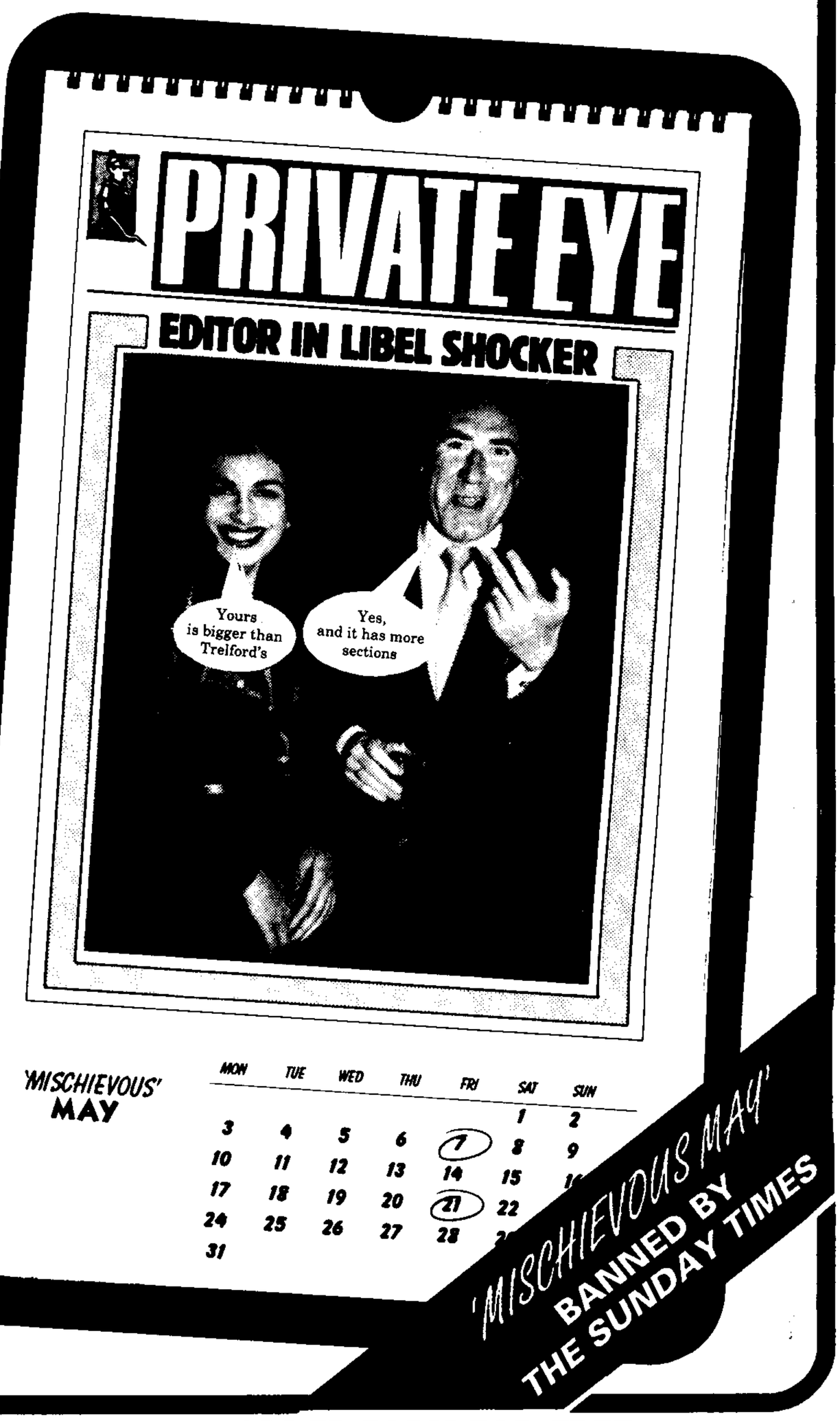
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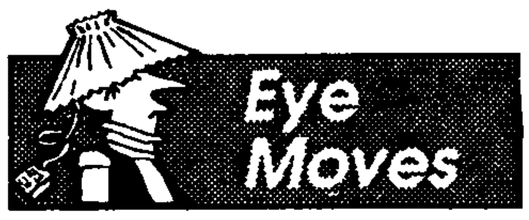

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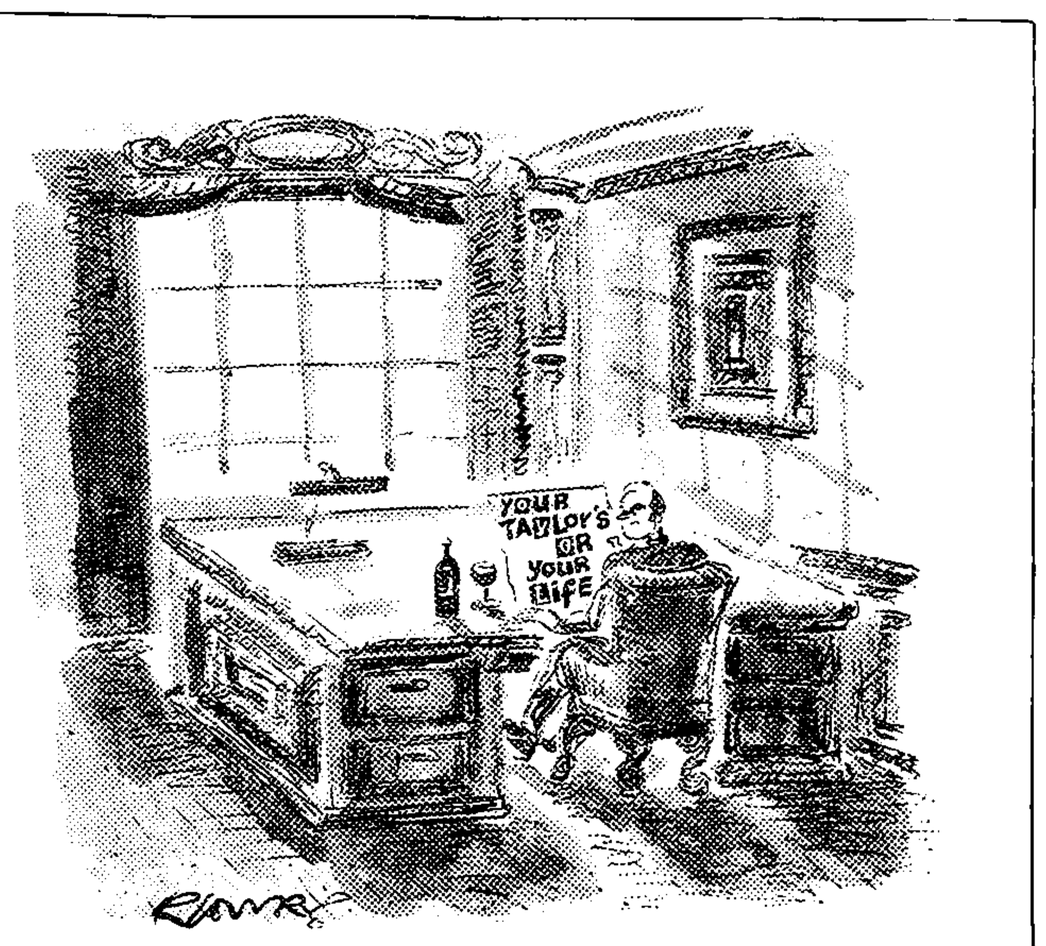

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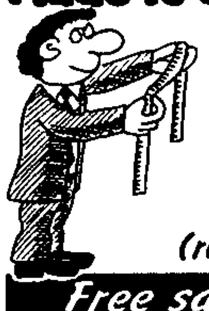
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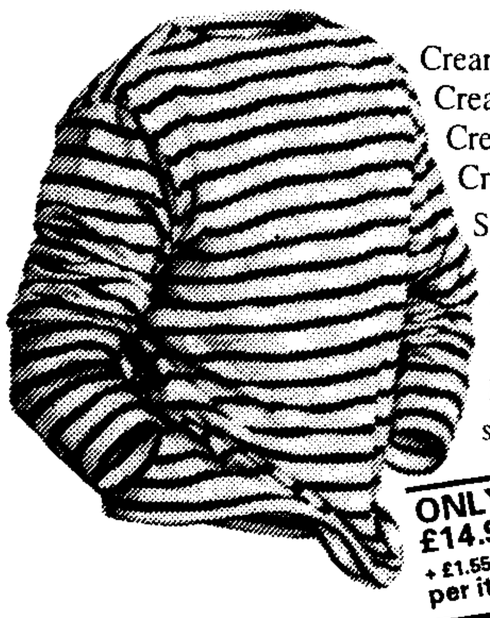

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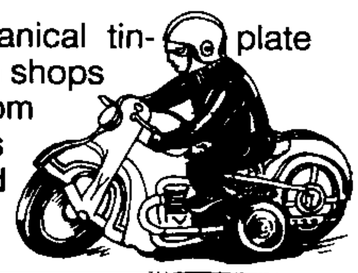

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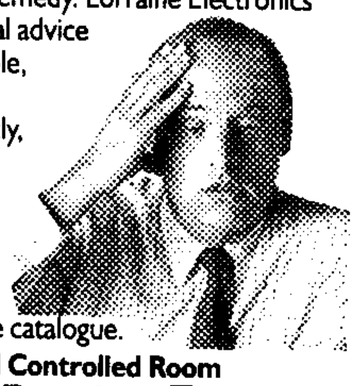

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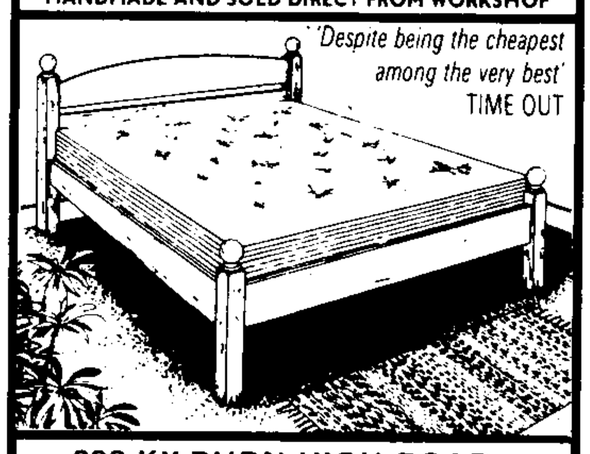

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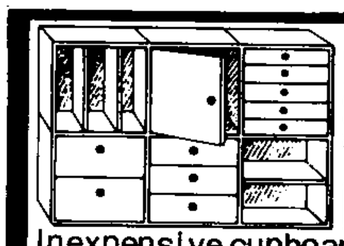

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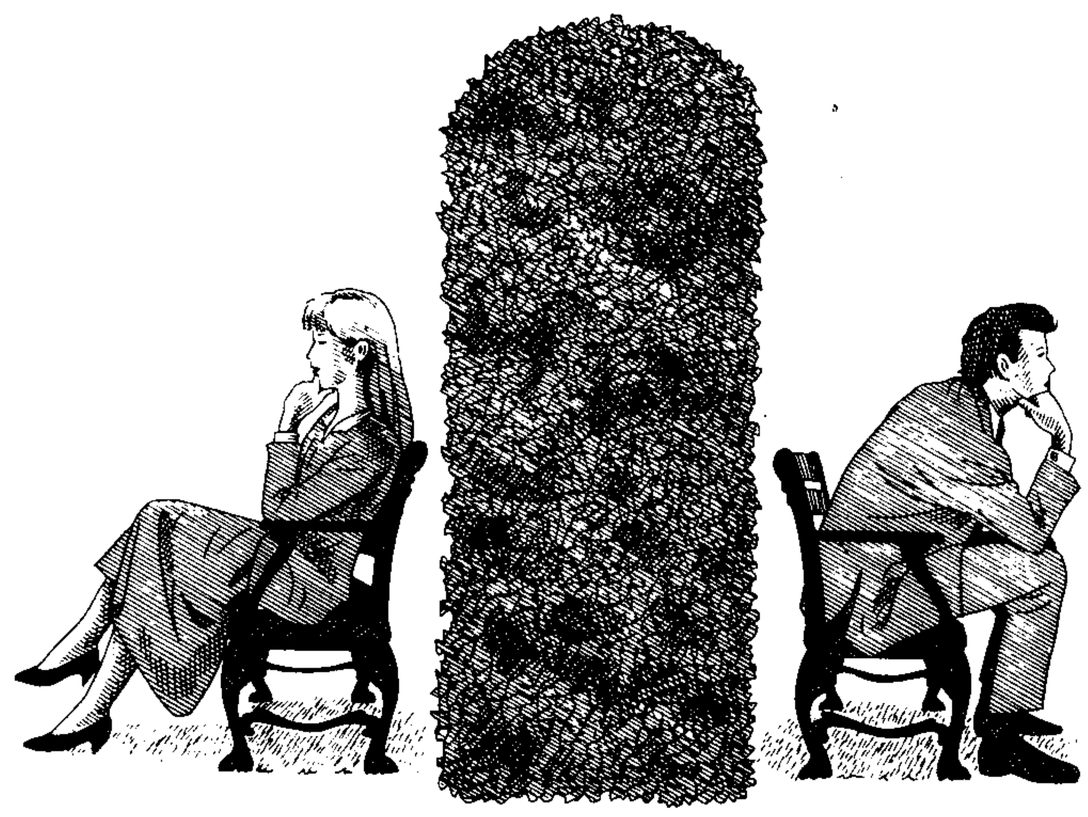

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